

Natalia Vlasova (Saint-Petersburg State University)

Chinese language learning and teaching: the prospects of online education

Panel: Modern education technologies and Chinese language teaching

Nowadays the system of online-education is being actively developed. Students of all ages can go online and study literally in every corner of the globe anytime they wish. This form of teaching gives teachers opportunity to bring their knowledge to the widest possible audience. Thanks to modern technologies teachers have an excellent opportunity to gather detailed information concerning who may be interested in the course and the problems students may face, because despite the online format of distance education the whole process requires an active feedback from the students and their communication with the teacher.

St. Petersburg State University is working upon a large number of online courses, including several Chinese language courses. The release of the course named "Basic Chinese" is scheduled for February 15, 2017. This course is designed for ten weeks and is partly based on material that first-year students of the Department of Orient and African Studies, majoring in Chinese, study at the beginning of the second semester within the program "Phonetics and Spoken Chinese". One of the objectives is to allow students who do not have access to "full-time" educational resources, go through basic vocabulary and grammar of the Chinese language (level A1-A2 according to the Common European Framework of reference for language learning). Moreover the course serves the purpose of popularization of the Chinese language in order to inspire respect for the Chinese culture.

We believe that this course will be useful for the students self-studying the Chinese language, as well as for Chinese language teachers in Russian secondary schools because Chinese as a second foreign language will be included into the school curriculum.

Undoubtedly we expect some difficulties due to the fact that a teacher can not hear students talk and practice, however, the feedback in the process of learning and technology development will help to improve gradually the ways of presenting the material.