

## DISTANCE LEARNING TECHNOLOGIES IN TEACHING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE ТЕХНОЛОГІЇ ДИСТАНЦІЙНОГО НАВЧАННЯ У ВИКЛАДАННІ ІНОЗЕМНОЇ МОВИ

*Over the past decades, computer technologies have developed rapidly, which has led to their intensive use in the educational process. At present higher education is going through a period of change, mainly related to the introduction of information technologies into the learning process. These changes entail not only the development of new technical means but also the improvement of teaching forms and methods, as well as the application of new approaches to teaching. Today in Ukraine, there is a process of rapid saturation with educational information and communication technologies, which necessitates a qualitative assessment of new approaches to education in terms of their adequacy to new life realities of the XXI century, since they are the technological basis for knowledge of our citizens. With the development of digital technologies and local networks, new learning opportunities have emerged allowing us to maintain the educational process at the proper level.*

*The introduction of modern ideas and teaching technologies, along with current advances in information tools, is a robust scientific and pedagogical base that promotes the progress of distance learning. The intensive growth of information and communication technologies, free access to the Internet, and a diversity of computers and software have made it possible to use interactive resources in the learning environment, called e-learning. The term e-learning refers to an electronic learning system, synonymous with such terms as, distance learning, computer-based learning, network learning, virtual learning, and learning with the help of information and electronic technologies. In the digital age, today's students have a great deal of experience in actively using digital technologies through resources such as Facebook, Instagram, blogs, podcasts, WhatsApp, etc. For them, the online environment is a familiar one. It has been established that distance learning is characterized by such general didactic properties that contribute to the efficiency of mastering the content of any academic discipline and, in particular, the study of foreign languages. Distance learning is a current reality, which is an integral part of the traditional form of learning, complements it, and expands the opportunities of classical university education.*

**Key words:** *foreign languages, distance learning, information technologies, interactivity, teaching methods.*

*За останні десятиліття комп'ютерні технології стрімко розвивалися, що призвело до їх інтенсивного використання в освіт-*

*ньому процесі. Наразі вища освіта переживає період змін, пов'язаних, головним чином, із впровадженням інформаційних технологій у навчальний процес. Ці зміни тягнуть за собою не тільки розробку нових технічних засобів, але й удосконалення форм і методів навчання, а також застосування нових підходів до викладання. Сьогодні в Україні відбувається процес стрімкого насичення освітніми інформаційно-комунікаційними технологіями, що зумовлює необхідність якісної оцінки нових підходів до освітнього процесу з точки зору їх адекватності новим життєвим реаліям XXI століття, оскільки саме вони є технологічною основою знань наших громадян. З розвитком цифрових технологій та локальних мереж з'явилися нові можливості для навчання, які дозволяють підтримувати освітній процес на належному рівні.*

*Впровадження сучасних ідей і технологій в освіті, а також розвиток інформаційних засобів є потужним науково-педагогічним підґрунтям, що сприяє прогресу дистанційного навчання. Інтенсивний розвиток інформаційно-комунікаційних технологій, вільний доступ до Інтернету, різноманітність комп'ютерів і програмного забезпечення зробили можливим використання інтерактивних ресурсів у навчальному середовищі, що отримало назву електронного навчання. Термін "електронне навчання" означає електронну систему навчання і є синонімом таких термінів, як дистанційне навчання, комп'ютерне навчання, мережеве навчання, віртуальне навчання, а також навчання за допомогою інформаційних та електронних технологій. У цифрову епоху сучасні студенти мають великий досвід активного використання цифрових технологій через такі ресурси, як Facebook, Instagram, блоги, подкасти, WhatsApp тощо. Для них онлайн-середовище є звичним. Встановлено, що дистанційне навчання характеризується такими загальнодидактичними властивостями, які сприяють ефективності засвоєння змісту будь-якої навчальної дисципліни і, зокрема, вивчення іноземних мов. Дистанційне навчання – це реальність сьогодення, яка є невід'ємною частиною традиційної форми навчання, доповнює її та розширює можливості класичної університетської освіти.*

**Ключові слова:** *іноземні мови, дистанційне навчання, інформаційні технології, інтерактивність, методи навчання.*

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**General statement.** Distance learning technology, which is a requirement of the times and has been very much in demand in education in recent years, solves some of the contradictions to a certain extent. The main feature of this technology is the mediated nature of teacher-student telecommunication. This form of interaction allows to maximize students' independent work, which is especially important in the transition to new educational standards, as a

significant number of hours are allocated for independent work. This reveals another peculiarity of distance learning, which lies in its psychological aspect, since the effectiveness of learning, which consists mainly of independent work, by 95% depends on the students themselves, their will, attention, assiduity, and self-control [1].

**Analysis of recent research and publications.** Distance learning deserves the attention of many

scholars. It is fair to say, some scientists emphasize that telecommunication, due to its mediated nature, cannot fully compensate for the lack of direct, "live" communication necessary for the effective implementation of joint teacher-student activities (O.I. Dmitrieva, M.I. Starov, M.S. Chvanova). However, most scientists (E.S. Polat, M.Y. Bukharkina, Y.L. Derange, Y.V. Aksenov, M.A. Merzlyakov, etc.) argue that this type of communication occurs between real and interacting partners. The main thing in this type of communication is its interactivity, which is conditioned by the reaction of the live interlocutor. Indeed, it is mediated, but it is real communication, which is vital and meaningful.

The challenge for pedagogical science is to master the existing modern teaching tools and to explore new technologies that are prospective in the teaching of foreign languages. The technology of distance learning of foreign languages, which includes different methods of work, is not only a new form of learning, providing the possibility of rapid transfer of information of any volume and type at any distance; interactivity through specially created multimedia information or implementation of the principles of cultural appropriateness and communicative presentation of the material [2]. The organization of teaching in this format requires students to be computer literate, but it also ensures a high level of interactivity provided by the Internet and reveals the multimedia potential of new digital innovations.

**The purpose of the article** is to consider the peculiarities of distance learning of foreign languages for students of non-linguistic higher education institutions; to analyze the structure of a distance learning course; to show the specifics of selecting and structuring its content; to emphasize the effectiveness of such methods as learning computer programs, social networks, e-mail, interactive whiteboards, online testing, audio and video recording of specific individual assignments, and videoconferencing in teaching a foreign language.

**The main idea.** In the digital age, distance learning is becoming more and more popular and to a certain extent helps to solve the existing problems. Distance learning is characterized by flexibility in terms of location and timing of learning activities, and it makes learning open and accessible. In addition, the Internet is an excellent medium of information, which increases the speed of transferring and receiving data and, therefore, affects the quality of teaching. Distance learning is an educational process that takes place at a distance, which is the main factor that distinguishes this form from the traditional one and makes it flexible. It is characterized by the absence of constant direct contact between the participants, but at the same time, this format of learning is interactive, as it allows regular interaction between the teacher and students, both in written and oral form,

which is especially important when teaching students a foreign language. And the use of computer technology in teaching a foreign language increases the efficiency of the learning process, as it allows students to find and use additional sources of information, listen to audio recordings, watch videos, and check their knowledge by doing various exercises.

Awareness of the potential of computer and telecommunication technologies as one of the significant trends in the modern education system has led to the classification of distance learning models depending on the technologies that dominate the learning process and the overall approach to learning. We are talking about a consultative model involving regular consultations with teachers and assessment of different types of work [3; p.43] and an asynchronous model based on a regular exchange of learning materials, homework, and results between the teacher and students. A detailed review of the specifics of foreign language teaching in the context of distance learning in today's information and education environment has shown that the specificity is due to the subject of Foreign Language. The peculiarity of this subject is that the significant components of the content of foreign language teaching are modes of activity, i.e. teaching different types of speech activity, namely speaking, listening, reading, and writing. It should be noted that a foreign language is both a goal and a means of learning. Communication with native speakers plays an important role in students' acquisition of a foreign language; therefore another means of distance learning is students' participation in international educational projects, which allows them to organize continuous communication in a foreign language with its native speakers.

Distance learning can provide students with a unique opportunity for intercultural interaction and the development of spontaneous foreign language communication. This is facilitated by the sufficiency and reality of communication, students' participation in tele- and videoconferences, and chat rooms. In this case, communication with native speakers implies not only an exchange of information on the issue under discussion but also real exposure to another culture. The reality of communication leads to a desire to communicate more in a foreign language, and the mechanism of such communication is the information learning environment. Distance learning is becoming a highly effective form of teaching and solves the main goal of teaching foreign languages – to teach foreign language communication. The student becomes a subject of learning; the pace of work is optimized; individualization and differentiation of learning are provided; control over the quality of learning and its objectivity is increased; operational feedback is ensured and, therefore, flexibility in managing the learning process is achieved [4, p. 125].

Infographics, videos, and podcasts can be used for training. The most common video conferencing platforms for classes in Ukraine are Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Meet, which have proved to be effective distance education platforms for monitoring learning. Messenger applications, such as Viber and Telegram, help to send students text and multimedia materials to prepare for classes, as well as provide effective feedback to the teacher, which is essential for the educational process.

When developing methods of distance learning in foreign languages, it is important to consider the following conditions:

1. Interpersonal or "live" communication is basic and most fruitful, as it is the most natural and informative way of sharing the experience of human activities.

2. The key figure in the learning process is the teacher: he/she acts as a direct source of learning information.

3. "Live" communication takes place mainly during classes, so the regularity of the classes plays an important role.

4. All types of speech activity should be taught, with listening and speaking being the leading ones.

5. Learning foreign languages outside communication with native speakers (naturally or artificially arranged) is meaningless. Therefore, it is necessary, firstly, to use various technical means of teaching that allow students to hear real foreign language speech (audio and video recordings as well as non-adapted fiction, documentary, and animated films of foreign countries), and secondly, to try to establish contacts with native speakers (for example, through correspondence).

6. Finally, it is well known that learning a foreign language requires a large amount of didactic and reference information, where dictionaries, grammar guides, and textbooks usually serve as storage units.

All of these conditions can be implemented through the didactic possibilities of new information technologies. The most important of these are:

- I. The possibility of systematic accumulation of learning information, its editing, and reliable storage.

Distance learning technologies make it possible to place the learning material on a server. The advantage of such an e-textbook is that the teacher can make additions and changes to its content as needed. Students are able to copy the material onto a floppy disk, print it out and work with it when and how they want. In addition, while studying the material, students can set the font size and type, change the colors used for the text, delete or move pictures, and even illustrate the text themselves, making it more coherent. All this contributes to better learning, i.e. the result of one's own work evokes positive emotions and creates additional motivation.

Email as a distance learning technique is both good and easy to use. This mailbox receives messages

which are addressed to this user and which can be read by them at their convenience. These messages may not only be text or graphics (pictures or photographs), but can also be audio or video clips. The convenience of e-mail lies above all in the fact that it does not require the correspondent and the addressee to be at the same time at their computers. This way of exchanging messages is called asynchronous. In the distance format of foreign language teaching, the teacher sends the student various study materials, individual assignments, and instructions for devices engaged in technical translation, as well as answers the student's questions. Thus, e-mail enables the teacher to conduct individual learning remotely, providing the student with a feedback channel, without which the learning process cannot be complete.

In addition, regular organization of video conferences on language learning issues reflects a new format of interactive remote communication that most participants find attractive. Such conferences are held for users wishing to discuss an issue they are interested in together. In the interest of distance learning, e-conferencing is an excellent opportunity for group conferences, classes in a creative atmosphere, group consultations, and answering frequently asked questions. Moreover, these activities are a suitable means to develop communication skills and research qualities of a student's linguistic personality [5, p. 70].

A whiteboard is also a technology used for distance learning of foreign languages. An electronic whiteboard is often created as part of an e-conference and serves for organizational tasks. In distance learning, an interactive whiteboard is used, for example, to organize study groups by interests and ability level.

- II. The possibility of intensive communication between students and lecturers, students with each other, as well as with partners from other countries. Telecommunication provides direct feedback between the teacher and the student. It is this feature that significantly distinguishes distance learning from part-time or correspondence learning and brings it closer to full-time learning. Modern computer networks allow two-way audio and video communication sessions between partners and are the most convenient technologies for learning foreign languages. However, audio and image transmission requires expensive equipment and high bandwidth, while text messages require minimal transmission and storage costs. For this reason, textual and graphical forms of information presentation usually prevail in telecommunication communication.

Therefore, additional ways should be sought to make up for the lack of face-to-face communication. An interactive computer multimedia textbook recorded on a CDROM is used for this purpose. Telecommunications can be used for intermediate and final tests and tutorials, i.e. for the operational management of

the learning process. The peculiarity of a computer multimedia textbook is that, in addition to text and graphics, it can use audio, animation, film, and video fragments. This ensures the immersion of students in an artificially created language environment, enabling them to listen to native speakers, learn to understand a foreign language by ear, and practice pronunciation by repeating after the speaker. Moreover, modern technologies already make it possible to recognize the correctness of a student's oral response.

An exceptionally important feature of distance language learning is the possibility of telecommunication between the learner and not only the teacher and learning partners but also with real-life partners who are native speakers. Students (first under the guidance of the teacher and then independently on their own initiative) can find and join international projects offered on the Internet, participate in international teleconferences to discuss their most exciting issues, and establish communication through correspondence with their peers from the target language country.

III. Empowering the teacher to manage the learning process. Whereas in face-to-face education the teacher is the main and direct source of information, in the case of distance learning he/she cedes this role to interactive computer-based learning programs, whose function is to organize, regulate and manage the learning process. In view of the above, when developing a course, it is necessary to rely on students' independent work with a pre-prepared and placed-at-their-disposal schedule of the course program and electronic learning materials.

The distance e-learning course should be process-oriented. Alongside the computer-based interactive multimedia textbook, the e-learning course should include electronic and printed materials, audio, and video recording, i.e. the whole set of didactic tools. During the learning process, the teacher manages the students' work with the material provided, conducts interim and final control and evaluates the completeness of knowledge assimilation as well as advises students on emerging issues [5, p. 71].

IV. The student's ability to choose the time and pace of learning. The organization of e-learning courses has a very valuable quality: the student can acquire knowledge at a convenient time and choose the most convenient pace of learning material and practical assignments. In today's face-to-face learning environment, with its rigid curriculum and timetable, this is an almost insurmountable problem. Thus, competently organized distance learning can be quite effective, and its development looks promising and quite realistic. An analysis of the university's work has shown that the organization of training using computer facilities and technologies has proved to be extremely appealing for students.

Despite its many advantages, distance learning also has its drawbacks. One of the main

disadvantages of distance learning is the lack of direct face-to-face communication between learners and the teacher. Distance learning imposes a number of requirements on the organization of the learning process, such as the need for a personal computer and Internet access, high requirements for defining learning objectives, and motivating students. Distance learning requires strict self-discipline, and the result depends directly on the student's independence and consciousness. There is no permanent control over students. This is due to the novelty of this form of learning, in addition, when working with a computer, students lose the sense of insecurity, which prevents them from showing their abilities in group classes [6, p. 19].

**Conclusion.** To summarise, distance learning is a special didactic system that requires special methods, techniques, and tools. That is why it is necessary to use its capabilities properly in order to maximize the results of the learning process to motivate students to work independently without additional control by the teacher. The availability of many modern methods of teaching foreign languages in a distance format makes the learning process not only appealing but also highly productive. Obviously, distance education has its positive and negative sides. The world is on the threshold of a new critical change in higher education. There are communication skills that cannot be developed only online. Meanwhile, online education requires students to be more disciplined, self-organized, and motivated in their approach to getting the desired education, and unfortunately, not all students are aware of this yet. Among the most common methods are the following: educational computer programs, the use of social media, email, electronic whiteboards, learning platforms, and video conferencing.

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