

РОЗДІЛ 2 ГЕРМАНСЬКІ МОВИ

UDC 378

DOI <https://doi.org/10.32782/tps2663-4880/2025.39.2.12>

ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF DISTANCE FOREIGN LANGUAGE TRAINING IN NON-LINGUISTIC HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

ПЕРЕВАГИ ТА НЕДОЛІКИ ДИСТАНЦІЙНОГО НАВЧАННЯ ІНОЗЕМНИХ МОВ У НЕМОВНИХ ЗАКЛАДАХ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ

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The article deals with the basic concepts, features and principles of distance learning in high school. The developments in Information and Communication Technologies have made distance education possible in Ukraine. Distance education offers lots of advantages to people who would like to receive education but who cannot do it for different reasons. The topicality and relevance of distance learning are highlighted in the research. The main emphasis is made on the benefits of foreign language learning through distance education both for students and teachers. The author emphasizes the use of an integrated approach to solving the main tasks that are combined in the distance learning system: a set of technologies with high didactic potential and telecommunication technology; computer-based foreign language teaching, multimedia technology and methods of intensive foreign language teaching. The main advantages of distance learning of foreign languages in non-linguistic higher educational institutions are identified: time saving, absence of the problem of classroom facilities, use of electronic learning materials and e-control of knowledge, greater mobility, the ability to show creativity, and the destruction of stereotypes about classroom learning. The main disadvantages of distance learning are formulated: dependence of the educational process on gadgets and the state of the Internet, psychological unpreparedness of teachers and students, the problem of monitoring compliance with academic integrity, the need for practice, negative media coverage of distance learning and the corresponding formation of a biased attitude towards it. Distance foreign language learners may face some problems analyzed in the article. The difficulties and problems of distance foreign language teaching have been revealed. The basic technologies and methods of distance education are presented.

Key words: distance learning, profession-oriented training, foreign languages, communication, learning platform.

У статті розглядаються основні поняття, особливості та принципи дистанційного навчання у вищій школі. Розвиток інформаційно-комунікаційних технологій зробив можливим дистанційне навчання в Україні. Дистанційна освіта має багато переваг для людей, які хотіли б здобути освіту, але не можуть цього зробити з різних причин. У дослідженні підкреслюється актуальність та затребуваність дистанційного навчання. Основний акцент зроблено на перевагах вивчення іноземних мов за допомогою дистанційної освіти як для студентів, так і для викладачів. Автор наголошує на використанні комплексного підходу до вирішення основних завдань, які поєднуються в системі дистанційного навчання: комплекс технологій з високим дидактичним потенціалом і телекомунікаційні технології; комп'ютерне навчання іноземної мови, мультимедійні технології та методика інтенсивного навчання іноземної мови. Визначено основні переваги дистанційного навчання іноземних мов у немовних закладах вищої освіти: економія часу, відсутність проблеми аудиторного фонду, використання електронних навчальних матеріалів та електронного контролю знань, більша мобільність, можливість проявити креативність, руйнування стереотипів щодо аудиторного навчання. Сформульовано основні недоліки дистанційного навчання: залежність навчального процесу від гаджетів та стану інтернету, психологічна невідповідність викладачів та студентів, проблема контролю за дотриманням академічної доброчесності, необхідність практики, негативне висвітлення дистанційного навчання у засобах масової інформації та відповідне формування упередженого ставлення до нього. Дистанційне вивчення іноземної мови може зіткнутися з деякими проблемами, проаналізованими в статті. Виявлено труднощі та проблеми дистанційного викладання іноземних мов. Представлено основні технології та методи дистанційної освіти.

Ключові слова: дистанційне навчання, професійно-орієнтоване навчання, іноземні мови, комунікація, навчальна платформа.

Problem statement. One of the current directions in the development of modern higher education is the implementation of information technologies into the educational process. The use of multimedia tools, Internet resources, and educational programs

has been actively introduced into the process of foreign language learning. The application of Internet technologies in foreign language classes contributes to the development of students' motivation, which is one of the most important factors in the learning

process. Modern computer technologies provide knowledge transfer and access to a variety of educational information, sometimes more effectively than traditional teaching methods. The prospects for using information technologies today are quite broad.

Analysis of recent research and publications.

The theoretical and practical aspects of the problem of computerization of education are covered in the works of B.S. Gershunsky, A.M. Korotkov, V.A. Letsko, O.A. Loktyushina, V.M. Monakhov, N.V. Morse, P.I. Pidkasisty, O.B. Tyshchenko, and others. The possibilities of computer communication in higher education regarding changes in the content of training in disciplines are revealed by M.N. Alekseev, S.G. Grigoriev. Psychological, pedagogical, and organizational conditions for the introduction of European standards of higher education in Ukraine are covered by Grigoriev, B.S. Gershunsky, N.A. Zhenov, A.A. Ogol, A.V. Petrov. However, scientists mainly focus on the properties of computer technologies as universal means of information processing.

Distance learning opens up the possibility of taking pre-profile and profile training of students to a new level, will allow for flexibility and variability in learning, and will contribute to a fuller disclosure of their potential through a virtually unlimited number of distance learning courses. The distance learning format opens up opportunities for students who are studying according to an individual plan, in correspondence form, and is relevant for students with limited physical capabilities (inclusive education). The distance learning format provides great opportunities in accordance with the needs of society in the training of highly professional specialists.

The aim of this study is a comprehensive analysis of the main features and factors influencing the introduction of distance learning of foreign languages in higher education institutions based on non-linguistic specialties.

Presentation of the main material. Distance learning is based on the basic didactic principles: scientific, systematic, systematic, active, developmental learning principles, visibility, differentiation and individualization of learning. When using distance learning, various methods of delivering educational methodological information to students of different categories can be used (abstracts and notes, interactive lectures and seminars). Today, several generations of special technologies in the field of distance education have already changed – from conventional printed educational publications to modern computer technologies: educational television, audio and video broadcasts, video conferencing, E-Learning, various Internet broadcasts, Internet conferences). Distance learning tools emphasize independent student work

[1, c. 62]. Although the student is at a distance from the teacher in space or time, modern telecommunication tools make it possible to have a dialog between the teacher and students. The analysis of domestic and foreign theory and practice of distance learning allows us to note the following characteristic features inherent in distance education:

- Flexibility (students study at a time, place and pace that suits them). Everyone can study as much as they personally need to master the material and gain the necessary knowledge in their chosen disciplines;

- Modularity (the basis of the EI programs is the modular principle).

- This allows you to create a curriculum that meets individual or group needs from a set of independent courses:

- Parallelism (learning can be conducted while combining main professional activities with education, i.e., “without interrupting production”);

- Remoteness (the distance from the student's location to the educational institution (provided there is quality communication) is not an obstacle to an effective educational process);

- Asynchronicity (in the learning process, the student and teacher work according to a schedule convenient for each);

- Coverage (this feature is sometimes also called “massiveness”; the number of students is not a critical parameter);

- Profitability (this feature refers to the economic efficiency of distance learning);

- Social impact (distance learning to some extent reduces social tension, providing equal opportunities to obtain education regardless of place of residence and financial conditions);

- Internationality (distance learning provides a convenient opportunity to export and import educational services).

The listed features define the advantages of distance education over other forms of education, while simultaneously placing specific demands on both the teacher and the student, in no way easing, and sometimes increasing, the workload of both parties. This refers to a new role and functions of the teacher. The requirements for the student also differ significantly from traditional ones.

In terms of its characteristics and certain organizational elements, distance education most closely resembles correspondence education. However, it presents significant, even visibly distinct differences, including a flexible learning schedule, enhanced communication capabilities with instructors through modern information technologies, and specialized learning kits designed for effective independent study [2, c. 114].

In recent decades, the use of distance learning tools has become a hot topic in foreign language learning. Reducing the number of hours of foreign language instruction, increasing requirements and increasing the amount of material encourage teachers to search for effective alternative means and methods of teaching, one of which is distance education.

Learning a foreign language contributes to improving the general education level and qualifications of specialists and is considered an integral element of the education system, which is characterized by integrity, autonomy and specificity. Students should have the skills of speaking, reading, translating and abstracting texts in their specialty.

The motivation for learning foreign languages is driven by the professional need of students to become highly qualified specialists with the ability to communicate in a foreign language. Therefore, one of the characteristics of non-linguistic specialties in universities is their professionally oriented nature. The specificity of the discipline "Foreign Language" lies in the fact that the dominant component of the content of foreign language learning is not the foundations of sciences, but the methods of activity – learning various types of linguistic and speech activities: speaking, listening, reading, writing. Priority in foreign language learning should be given to oral exercises. This reflects both the specificity of the discipline and the main difficulty of teaching foreign languages, especially in developing speaking skills. The formation of communicative competence requires the priority of interactive teaching methods for individual or group work of students. Distance learning of foreign languages using computer and telecommunication technologies should ensure the implementation of the following tasks: formation and development of reading skills with the direct use of Internet materials; 1 improvement of listening skills based on adapted and authentic audio texts; formation of translation and abstracting skills of texts in the specialty; improvement of monologue and dialogic speaking skills; expansion of active and passive vocabulary, familiarization with the vocabulary of modern foreign language; formation of elements of global thinking (dialogue of cultures); formation of stable motivation of cognitive activity, the need to use a foreign language in real communication; formation 2 of communication culture. Research in the field of pedagogical technology confirms that the potential of computer-based distance learning can be most effectively utilized in foreign language learning, which includes discussion, intensive mental activity, and collaborative work. Today in Ukraine, consumers are offered numerous and diverse elec-

tronic manuals and computer programs for learning foreign languages, most of which are simplified popular science guides that cannot become a source of in-depth knowledge [3, c. 58]. Characteristic shortcomings of many existing electronic manuals also include arbitrary, methodically ill-conceived presentation of educational material. A large number of electronic manuals are hypertext analogues of well-known (and usually foreign) printed publications. At the first stage of developing an electronic manual, it is more correct and rational to create your own manual in printed form, test it in the educational process, and edit it. The creation of electronic manuals for foreign languages should begin with a deep analysis of learning objectives, didactic capabilities of new technologies for transmitting educational information, and correction of criteria for monitoring and evaluating the level of knowledge acquisition [4, c. 745].

The main criteria for the quality of an electronic textbook or manual, in our opinion, are as follows:

- high quality of the content;
- the presence of a defined concept in the use of the presented products and the provision of a sufficient number of methodological recommendations;
- the presence of such essential properties that can be realized exclusively by electronic means. On the other hand, the current economic and technological situation in Ukraine is such that traditional printed textbooks and manuals remain the primary teaching tools. As already mentioned, prioritizing students' independent work requires rethinking the methodological foundations of foreign language teaching and creating qualitatively new manuals that would meet requirements such as: scientificity, authenticity (correspondence to the real modern foreign language), systematic organization of material both within the entire manual and within its individual structural parts (lessons), comprehensive presentation of language material, interconnection of learning different types of speech activity, professionally oriented character.

The problem of distance learning of foreign languages in "non-language" higher education institutions, where, in fact, this course is often non-core, despite the declared pro-European vector, is quite relevant. However, our own results of practical work with distance learning tools turned out to be contradictory, as numerous advantages and disadvantages of such learning were identified [5, c. 88].

1. Time-saving: (for both the teacher and the student) on travel to the place of study, classroom or lecture hall, library, etc.; this is valuable for students who often move between different buildings. At the same time, this imposes obligations to be punctual, both for the teacher and for the students.

2. Absence of classroom space problems: which is especially relevant when the discipline is taught to the entire student cohort of the course simultaneously.

3. Ability to use electronic learning materials: which is impossible if the classroom is not computerized or equipped with an electronic whiteboard. Ultimately, in 2020, teachers shared the same materials as before, but all communication took place through electronic learning tools.

4. Application of the same electronic knowledge control system: as in offline classes, but without the need to use a computer lab.

5. Greater flexibility and mobility: for both teachers and students, regarding providing consultations, time and workload distribution.

6. More opportunities for creativity and collaboration: flexibility and mobility of the participants in the process, learning according to new rules. All this contributed to increasing the level of competitiveness of both teachers and students.

7. Psychological aspect: breaking stereotypes, forming the idea that “classes are possible outside the classroom” or “learning is possible with an e-teacher.”

However, distance learning also revealed a number of shortcomings:

1. Absolute dependence of the learning process organization on the state of the internet network and technical means. The absence of an internet connection or a faulty gadget makes online work impossible. Unfortunately, the first experience of organizing distance learning online in 2020 showed that due to the high load on the internet network, there were connection problems. The quality of the internet connection, which neither students nor teachers had previously paid attention to, turned out to be decisive.

2. Psychological unpreparedness of students and teachers for this format of classes. Combined with the negative coverage of distance learning for medical professionals in the mass media and criticism of such learning, this led to a non-serious attitude from students and teachers, and sabotage of such learning. Both sides of the learning process at the beginning of distance learning expected that this stage would be temporary, for a few weeks, so often classes were not held at all, with the hope of “catching up later.” The stigmatization of distance learning for medical professionals as unreliable also led to students' unwillingness to improve their own knowledge and skills, and to not attend classes, and in teachers – to a low level of educational and methodological materials provided for the class. Another feature, which was particularly clearly observed in the spring of 2020, was the excessive workload of students with written assignments, independent work, through

which teachers tried to compensate for the lack of classroom lessons. This led to physical exhaustion of students, completion of large volumes of unnecessary work, and a decrease in motivation to learn. It is also worth noting the unpreparedness of some teachers for distance learning, associated with the rejection of everything new and the fear of losing their jobs (unwillingness to accept new roles “teacher-student-computerized system,” etc.).

3. Low level of information and technical education of teachers. While most students master the use of technical learning tools without problems, some older generation teachers may find it difficult to use online platforms, check assignments online, and even conduct classes or lectures online in conference mode.

4. Control over academic integrity. Physical control of compliance with academic integrity during online learning, in the presence of numerous screen filters, programs for hiding extraneous sounds, and even the physical ability to use other sources of information during surveys and interviews, requires a rapid response from teachers. It is possible to prevent manifestations of academic dishonesty in distance learning by developing a set of individual tasks in large quantities, creating creative tasks, problem-solving tasks, time limits for completing tasks, visual control of task completion using a wide-angle video camera, and the possibility of further individual defense of the work by passing an interview with the teacher. Another option to prevent manifestations of academic dishonesty is the non-standard and creative nature of control tasks.

There is a prevailing negative attitude towards distance learning as not providing an adequate level of education. Mass media actively spread this stigma, repeatedly raising the issue of the inadmissibility of distance education, the low quality of such education, and providing results of street surveys and their attitudes.

Conclusions. Thus, the analysis of the main characteristics of distance learning and teaching foreign languages in higher education institutions, the principles and technologies of distance education, allowed us to draw the following conclusions:

Distance learning is one of the priority and relevant areas of modernization of higher education. This form of education enables the creation of systems for mass continuous self-learning and general information exchange. The main didactic principles on which distance learning is based are: scientificity, systematicity, regularity, activity, principles of developmental learning, visualization, differentiation, and individualization of learning. The main characteristics of distance education determine its advantages over

other forms of education, while simultaneously placing certain specific requirements on both the teacher and the students. Since we are talking about distance learning and teaching foreign languages, specific problems and difficulties in implementing this form of education should be taken into account. This is especially true for the creation of electronic manuals for foreign languages that would meet requirements

such as: scientificity, authenticity, comprehensive presentation of language material, interconnection of learning with various types of speech activity, professionally oriented character.

We see the prospects for further research in the study of effective methods and technologies for implementing distance learning of professionally oriented foreign language in non-specialized faculties.

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