

Trends in Distance Education in the World

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Abstract: This article describes modern trends in the development of distance education in the world. The main advantages and disadvantages of distance education are highlighted.

Keywords: distance education, higher education, Synchronous Distance Learning, Asynchronous Distance Learning, Network technology.

Introduction. The COVID-19 pandemic affected most countries of the world and almost all spheres of public life, and the education system was no exception. One of the ways to contain coronavirus infection is still social exclusion; its measures required the partial or complete closure of educational institutions and their associated infrastructure. Localization and social exclusion measures have led to shocks that the education system has not experienced since World War II. [2]

As a result, more than 1.5 billion students worldwide (91.3% of the total number of students) are cut off from their schools and universities. [3]

School closures impact not only students, teachers, and families, but have far-reaching economic and societal consequences. School closures in response to the pandemic have shed light on various social and economic issues, including student debt, digital learning, food insecurity, and homelessness, as well as access to childcare, health care, housing, internet, and disability services. The impact was more severe for disadvantaged children and their families, causing interrupted learning, compromised nutrition, childcare problems, and consequent economic cost to families who could not work. In response to school closures, UNESCO recommended the use of distance learning programs and open educational applications and platforms that schools and teachers can use to reach learners remotely and limit the disruption of education.

Main part. The concept of "distance education" has firmly entered the world educational lexicon. Over the past decades, it has become a global phenomenon of educational and information culture, changing the face of education in many countries of the world. The whole industry of educational services, united by the common name "distance education", impresses with a huge number of students, the number of educational institutions, the size and complexity of the infrastructure, the scale of investment and cash flow. The ICDL database (International Computer Law) contains a description of more than 850 distance education centers located on all continents, in which approximately 12 million students study in various professional education programs alone, which is about 13-14% of the total number of students in the world. The development of distance education is recognized as one of the key areas of the main educational programs of UNESCO "Education for All", "Education for Life", "Education without Borders".[4]

The difference between distance education and other forms of education (full-time education and self-education) lies in obtaining education through interactive communication mediated at a distance. At the same time, the set of educational tools cannot be determined once and for all, it varies and includes, along with telecommunications, interactive educational and methodological materials on various media.

We can say that distance education is a new phenomenon in pedagogy. All studies of scientific-pedagogical and educational-pedagogical literature, regulatory and legal documents relating to distance education, speak of one thing - there is no single interpretation of the essence and content of this concept.[1]

Outdated technologies are being replaced by modern technologies, which universities in all countries use for remote learning. At the moment, universities are actively using three types of technologies to transfer knowledge remotely.

Case technology - educational materials are provided to students on printed and multimedia media. This technology is used in combination with face-to-face classes: review lectures, seminars, trainings, consultations, and tests. Part of the communication with the teacher, as well as obtaining information from electronic libraries and databases of universities can be carried out via the Internet.

Network technology - the use of computer training programs and electronic textbooks, which are hosted on the Internet servers of the university. Through the Internet, you can contact the teacher, take intermediate and final tests. Exams are held at the nearest training center to the student's place of residence.

Television and satellite technology. This technology is similar to network technology, only contact (lectures and seminars) between teachers and students is carried out via satellite communication channels.

Students can use one method, combine them or use all at once, depending on their technical capabilities.

The various types of distance learning are represented hereunder:

Types	Description
Synchronous Distance Learning	Synchronous means at the same time. In asynchronous distance education courses, learning is provided by way of live chatting or teleconferencing between the learner and the instructor. It lacks flexibility as it requires the student to be present when the class is scheduled.
Asynchronous Distance Learning	In a synchronous distance learning higher level of flexibility is provided to the students, i.e. the students can study at their own convenience. This is mainly used when the course involves a lot of assignments and project work and generally, a week's time is provided to the students to submit the assignment. Online notice or bulletin boards are used for communication purposes.
Hybrid Distance Learning	It is a combination of synchronous and asynchronous distance education. Here, the students need to be present in the classroom, and that too, when it is suitable for the students. Hence, the timings are flexible for the students to attend the class. Assignments and projects are given to the students, which they can complete as per their own convenience, and submit them before the due date.
Computerized Distance	In computerized distance learning the student must gather at the computer lab to receive instructions from the teacher, at a predetermined time.

Learning	
Fixed time Online Courses	It requires students to log in for the online course opted by them at the predetermined time. It uses live chats and video conferencing to impart knowledge to students.
Open schedule online course	It includes online courses in which the students are given a fixed schedule however they can study at their own convenience. To complete the assignments, students are provided study material via email, eBooks and bulletin boards.

Some advantages of distance learning can be identified.

1. No geographic boundaries. Students and teachers can be located anywhere in the world where the Internet works well. Let's say a student can live in a small village in the Far North, and his teacher can live on the Black Sea coast, but this will not prevent them from talking about term papers or defending a diploma.
2. Saving time. No need to waste time on the road: you can connect to the lesson without getting up from your favorite sofa. The freed hours can be spent on quality training or communication on current educational issues.
3. Comfortable environment. Instead of uncomfortable wooden desks and benches, you can study while sitting in a soft computer chair with a mug of delicious tea.
4. All communication between teachers and students is recorded. The dialogue on educational issues takes place through correspondence in chats, and the organizers save the lessons in the recording. You can always return to these materials if you forgot or did not understand something.
5. Saving money. Costs are reduced for all participants in the process: the administration of the educational institution, teachers and students. Thus, the administration saves on rent and maintenance of premises, and if virtual simulators are used, then on equipment. In addition, one teacher can conduct a webinar for several hundred students, which is difficult to implement in a face-to-face format. Students and teachers do not spend money on travel, meals in canteens and office clothes.
6. Psychological comfort. Remember the situation when the teacher at the end of a lesson or a pair asks: "Did everyone understand everything?", And most of the students are silent. There are many reasons: someone is already tired, someone is embarrassed to ask a question and is afraid that he will look stupid. Perhaps later questions will arise, but it is problematic to ask them - the lecture has already ended. There are no such difficulties in online learning: you can ask a question in a chat, and this is psychologically easier to do than to voice your doubts in front of all your classmates in the audience.

Here are the main disadvantages of distance learning.

1. Lack of personal contact with the teacher. In this regard, an individual approach to the student is impossible, the emotional component is completely absent. The transfer of knowledge becomes non-personal.
2. Decreased motivation and self-control. At home, there is a high risk of losing interest in learning. You need to have tough self-discipline and strong motivation to learn on your own without constant supervision.
3. Lack of practice. Remote access predisposes to a limited number of practical classes, which affects the quality of the education received.

4. Technical dependence. For constant access to the source of knowledge, the student must be well equipped technically. At a minimum, you need to have a computer and internet access.
5. Diploma quotation. A diploma issued by a state university at the end of distance learning has the same validity as a diploma obtained in a full-time department. However, according to statistics, employers prefer candidates with traditional diplomas.
6. You need motivation to sit down at the computer and connect to the class. It is difficult for students who have problems with self-discipline to study remotely - they need good reasons to prefer a lecture on linear algebra to a TV series. In the classroom of the university, you inevitably have to listen to the teacher, and at home there are many distractions, and at first, students make great efforts to get involved in the learning process.
7. Internet problems can interfere with learning. Due to technical failures, the sound or image on the webinar may suddenly disappear, and there is a risk of missing important information. Of course, then you can ask and the information will be duplicated for you, but for this you need to contact the teacher and wait for an answer from him, and this is an extra waste of time.
8. The student must independently equip his own workplace. It is difficult to study from the phone on an ongoing basis - you need a laptop or computer. To listen to lectures while everyone is sleeping at home, you need to buy headphones. In addition, for the utmost concentration of attention, you need to find a place where no one will interfere, and this is sometimes problematic.

Conclusions. An analysis of the advantages and disadvantages of distance learning, using Internet technologies, allows us to draw the main conclusions:

- distance learning should now be perceived as one of the modern forms of full-time education, which can only be used in conjunction with well-known classical ones. Basically, it should be applied to the study of social-humanitarian disciplines, and not one or several individual profiles (specialties) of training;
- distance learning should be the main form of correspondence education.
- Additionally, we can distinguish the following groups of people for whom distance learning is promising:
- those wishing to receive a second higher education in social and humanitarian areas (profiles) of training.
- training in the system of additional education - advanced training, including university teachers.
- training for people with disabilities.

The development of a distance learning system for full-time and part-time forms, as well as for these groups of people, involves the development of mainly active teaching methods, i.e. interaction (discussion) in the process of teaching a teacher with students. [6]

The development of distance learning requires the use of new approaches and techniques. Improving courses using distance learning today is associated with the following activities:

- ✓ development of high-quality multimedia software –voiced video and slide films, animations, graphics;
- ✓ increasing the level of active teaching methods, involving the development and application of mathematical models of physical devices (elements, systems) and technological processes;
- ✓ an increase in the diversity of the fund of evaluation tools, including control and test tasks;

- ✓ an increase in the volume of educational material, which, thanks to multimedia tools, will increase the volume of learned material.

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