

DISTANCE LEARNING IN TEACHING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

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The consequence of global information in XXI century is a significant development of information technology. Formation of new information technologies influences education. A number of educational programs aimed at developing skills in a certain field of science or technology has recently developed. The most widely spread are computer training courses. Modern Internet technologies created proper conditions for distance learning. The advantage of this type of training is that students can work and consult with a tutor at the library, at home, etc. One can attend free on-line workshops devoted to some specific disciplines. This type of communication is a key factor in distance learning. It promotes better perception of material and direct (on-line) access to educational data that are offered in the form of texts, graphics, videos, tests, etc. The concept of “distance learning” is based on three components: an open study principle, both computer studies and interviews with teachers, and students using modern telecommunications. Prerequisites for distance learning are an extensive system of training centers whether directly in the country or abroad.

Distance course includes the following components:

1. Introductory information (information about data, their goals and objectives).
2. Previous data which allow student assess their knowledge in the context of the course curriculum properly.
3. Recommendations for training material and courses.
4. A theoretical part in the form of modules.
5. Practical work with tests (assessment).
6. The list of questions that occur frequently and answers.
7. Glossary.
8. A list of links to other sites on the Internet for obtaining advanced material

The prominent feature of distance form is the flexibility and diversity of educational information set in modules, rather high level of knowledge and skills control, a new role of the teacher, the use of information technology, etc.

Today, two types of distance learning courses are distinguished. The first type includes free courses contained on a website that are designed for self-study of students. The number of such courses is growing, but their main drawback is that they do not provide a certificate proving quality of knowledge. The second type is provided for a group of learners. It involves interaction between students and teachers, such courses are paid, but the advantage is that they provide a certificate included in the system of Bachelor, Specialist or Master Degree.

One should keep in mind that distance learning, as well as any other kind of educational activity cannot be separated from the general education system. The education system of each discipline contains a basic course, specialized training and further educational facilities. As for distance learning of a foreign language, one should focus primarily on the purpose of learning. Under the guidance of a leading role of active approach of foreign languages learning, such training must be provided to each student. It allows to devote plenty of time to perform all tasks as needed including individual student rate, the level of awareness of the topic, master necessary skills and abilities.

Distance learning has one major drawback. This is a significant limitation of oral practice. Performing oral exercises and direct communication remain beyond the capacity of modern information technology. To solve this problem videoconferencing may be provided, but mass use of these technologies can be expensive. So it should be a combination of full-time and distance learning. For instance, formation of reading and writing skills can be covered by a distance form, while speaking should be taught in the classroom.

The use of a worldwide network provides access to educational information, but there is a danger of excessive or redundant information provided by numerous Internet resources. To prevent this, it is necessary to develop a clear conceptual approach to foreign language teaching; select adequate teaching methods, educational technologies, a system of exercises, activities to the peculiar subject; carefully prepare students for such activity. The second problem with the Internet is that the capture of information technology leads to the fact that the student forgets about the purpose of education . To avoid this problem, you should involve information resources worldwide network only on the basis of practice priorities.

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The collection includes conference abstracts of the reports made at the XX International TESOL-Ukraine Conference “TESOL Ukraine: New Vistas of Research and Teaching” which took place in Bohdan Khmelnytsky National University in Cherkasy on April 29-30, 2015. More than 200 teachers from higher and secondary educational establishments of Ukraine, Canada, the USA, Moldova participated in the work of the Conference. The reports presented at the conference deal with a wide range of research problems in the spheres of methodology, linguistics, emerging technologies, academic writing, literature, interpretation, translation studies, intercultural communication etc.

The publication is aimed at EFL professionals, researchers, students, post-graduate students and at all those interested in the theoretical and practical aspects of teaching and studying English worldwide.

Збірник наукових праць містить статті та тези доповідей учасників 20-ої Міжнародної конференції “TESOL Ukraine: New Vistas of Research and Teaching”, яка відбулася у Черкаському національному університеті імені Богдана Хмельницького 29-30 квітня 2015 року. У конференції взяли участь понад 200 учасників, серед яких викладачі та вчителі вищих та середніх навчальних закладів України, Канади, США, Молдови. Доповіді охоплюють широкий спектр досліджень, які здійснюються науковцями та викладачами вищих і середніх навчальних закладів у галузі методики викладання іноземних мови, лінгвістики, сучасних технологій, академічного писемного мовлення, літературознавства, інтерпретації, перекладознавства, міжкультурної комунікації тощо.

Видання розраховано на науковців, викладачів, студентів, аспірантів та на широке коло дослідників, зацікавлених у вивченні та викладанні англійської як іноземної.

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