
THE PRINCIPLES OF CREATION OF TEACHING MATERIALS AND ORGANIZATION OF UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE LEARNING PROCESS USING DISTANCE SUPPORT IN SENIOR CLASSES

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Abstract: *The article deals with the topicality and problems of using information and communication technologies in secondary education, conditions and methods for Ukrainian language learning with the distance support in senior classes. The article shows the principal similarity of distance learning to training one. The common and specific principles of creation of teaching materials for a distance learning course are described. It reveals the conditions of effective organization of Ukrainian language learning with distance support on the material of distance course "Business Ukrainian and Culture of Communication".*

Keywords: *learning process with distance support, principles of creation of teaching materials, conditions of learning process effective organization with distance support.*

ACM Classification Keywords: *K 3.1.*

Problems and Topicality of Distance Learning in Secondary School

One of the important existing problems that should be scientifically and practically solved while implementing distance learning in secondary school is the creation of curricula involving different forms of combination of face-to-face and distance learning, providing the ratio of individual and general learning programs, and usage of the network resources [Khutorskoi, A.V., 2001].

For this purpose, an experiment with implementation of Ukrainian language learning with distance support in senior classes is being carried out. The pilot distance course "Speech Culture and Business Ukrainian" was tested in April-May, 2005 (<http://dl.kpi.kharkov.ua/techn3/tu196/DEFAULT.ASP?ukr>), an improved course "Business Ukrainian and Culture of Communication" (<http://dl.kpi.kharkov.ua/techn3/tu209/DEFAULT.ASP?ukr>) was started in senior classes in Kiev in 2005-2006 academic year.

According to the result of the experiment, methods of organization of mother tongue distance learning process are one of the most complicated problems. The reason for this is not only the necessity to change the traditional organizational forms of work which is required under the conditions of increase of independent and individual work of learners, and the necessity to reduce the usage of explanatory and illustrative methods of teaching as well as to enlarge the member of practical and creative research works, but also because it is necessary to develop learners' readiness to be rightful subjects of the learning process. Another difficulty in implementing distance learning support is the specific nature of the subject teaching itself: accentuated personal attitude towards the teacher and the subject, the necessity to work with a large quantity of text material, the peculiarity of the tasks that have to be done orally (when learners, pronounce something or speak out their opinions, etc).

The topicality of the research is also concerned with the fact that the experiments on usage of computer technology in the mother tongue learning process have not given unambiguous results. Some scientists [Attwell, P., 2001; Singleton, S. and Simmons, F., 2001] stress the positive effect of using computer programs for teaching reading and literacy, while the British Economic Society informs that the usage of informational and communication technology has not been useful for the development of learners' basic reading skills.

The main approaches of teaching process design

To achieve successful implementation of distance support it is important, in the first place, to design the learning process and only then to carry out its computer realization. It has not been done yet for the distance support of Ukrainian language (as the mother tongue) learning in the secondary school. The designing process includes the following:

- 1) Creation of teaching materials for the distance course,
- 2) Software,

3) Organization of the distance support of learning.

Will consider the first and third points more in detail.

Creation of teaching material

The researchers in the field of designing and the organization of distance learning process mark, that the development of teaching materials is one of the primary goals which are necessary for solving the given type of training into the school education. The ideal purpose for those who is going to develop the teaching materials for distance learning is their maximal simplicity and a transparency of the organization in use, keeping the maximal information saturation.

As far as the adaptation of well recommending itself distance (network) technologies in the educational process of secondary school will be successful, depends on many reasons. This is a methodically competent organization of educational process, and presence of didactic correctly created teaching materials with system of practical tasks, and the organization of didactic justified communications, and system engineering of the control of educational achievements with an opportunity of observation of efficiency of process of educational activity.

The general recommendations for creation of teaching materials for distance leaning training courses

The positive possibilities of new environments for creation of teaching materials are traditionally emphasized: a possibility of variety of material contents, use of different ways of its performance with using of all spectrum of multimedia (the text, diagrams, audio, video, animations), expansion of possibilities for search and navigation, the creation of the objective and all-round monitoring system, attraction of network technologies for the organization of interaction etc.

The following principles of development of teaching materials [Efimova, L.A., Dmitrievskaya, N.A., 2002] are allocated in the literature. They are:

1. The Priority of the educational aims.
 2. Granting of additional opportunities.
 3. The Account of features of target group.
 4. The Friendly interface providing an effective interaction between pupils, teaching materials and the teacher.
 5. Use of teaching materials to provide fast loading pages, transparent navigation and unity of style, rational use of means of multimedia, readership of the text, friendly color scale, absence of technical mistakes. The performance of text materials with such characteristics as scanning, capacity, and also integrity and sufficiency.
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Features of the organization of training and development of teaching materials for distance support of learning of the course "Business Ukrainian and Culture of Communication"

The practice of realization of a distance learning course "Business Ukrainian language and culture of communication" (<http://dl.kpi.kharkov.ua/techn3/tu209/DEFAULT.ASP?ukr>) has shown, that the implementation of distance learning in its classical style into the process of teaching in secondary school can result to decrease of efficiency of educational process. To carry out the training with distance learning support as form of internal learning using the distance (network) course is more expediently. The organization of such type of educational process gives the following possibilities: preservation of personal contact of pupils with the teacher, leveling of lacks of materials of a distance course, use of operative management by educational process due to a variation of structure of motivation, rate, a rhythm, a level of complexity of an studying material etc.

In distance support there is involved a factor of the person of the teacher, influencing on quality of process and result of educational activity, keeping for him a position of the carrier of knowledge, as against the distance learning where the complete sets of teaching materials act as carriers of knowledge. Somewhat at such form of the organization of educational process the teacher feels an additional loading as his didactic and methodical functions he carries out directly during educational process in a mode of real time. The teaching material prepared and submitted in the course does not relieve him of necessity of fast reaction and rearranging a course of a lesson depending on individual trajectories of each pupil training, a degree of their information and computer competence, technical problems in work. The necessity of realization of work on creation of the special

educational environment which are taking into account the needs of the pupil and his specific features; the thought over system of submission of tasks and the personal approach to pupils it is underlined in connection with the absence of such at existing virtual schools [Khiltunen, O., 2001].

Besides, if for the distance learning organization, as a whole a serious problem is the indistinct curriculum for training, so for the learning with the distance support is a quite acceptable variant. More often, in a course it is placed too more material, than it is necessary to acquire, however the success of training is achieved due to criterion function in teaching a material that supposes various tactics of submission of the information by the teacher. Though overcoming of the tendency to glut by the theoretical information remains the important requirement to materials in a course. Also it is necessary to pay attention to the precise connection between the aims, tasks and material, placed in a distance course. In this aspect a distance learning is close to training: If in a training there is a surplus of the information, its participants lose understanding of the aim of training, and practical tasks are replaced with lectures, so a training, losing the interactivity, and together with its appeal, loses the training possibilities; if the same occurs in a distance support - the material of a distance course is ignored by pupils and, accordingly, is not acquired by them.

However a question on quantity of information in distance learning it is a question that does not have the unequivocal answer. It is necessary to note, that the lack of information is also bad, as well as its surplus. Proceeding from impossibility of exact definition of opportunities of mastering and - or performance of practical tasks by pupils - teaching materials are created much which allows to individualize educational process for pupils with different rate rhythms and cognitive opportunities.

Besides above-stated, the development of teaching materials for distance support of studying of the native language is perceived as enough complicated problem because of subject specificity. The matter is that at use of the distance course focused mostly on the written communications, from the system of methodical receptions of formation of language and speech competence oral speech "drops out": speaking, monologic and dialogical speech, and also those components of rhetoric, which connected to communicative and social competence. As an output from this situation the use of the organization of training with distance support of elements of active social training with the purpose to keep oral dialogue is used. Especially it is important in connection with that, that computer environment communications, being more controllable by the subject of dialogue, can provoke further avoiding of real / straight/opened (as though uncontrollable) communications.

The practice of work has shown also, that a teaching material it would be desirable:

1. Quantitatively to place within the limits of the first screen. It promotes faster and complete acquiring of material.
2. To form the teaching materials, depending on an studying subject, on different strategy: 1) by a principle of concentric circles (base concepts, base concepts and examples, base concepts, examples and the additional information), 2) by a principle of a circuit: the basic concepts - examples and practical tasks - the additional information, 3) by a principle of " the teacher's abstract " where in the compressed form the essence of studying questions is selected.
3. Logically to finish each of parts of a teaching material during the lesson so to have possibility to master them in any order.
4. To carry out the precise structurization of material on importance. Thus, important for the perception of the information from the screen is not only its correct structurization, but also an explanation of rules of this system. As the type of registration of teaching materials is similar to what is used everywhere for structurization of text resources of a network the Internet, sot, it goes the process of formation of information readiness of the pupil to use of information and communication technologies (ICT).
5. Taking into account different resource possibilities it is expedient to submit a teaching material in the text and graphic form as its presentation in such kind demands the minimal expenses.

The conditions of the organization of the distance support of learning

Describing the essence of distance support of learning, it should be noted that the results of psychological and pedagogical research for the influence of the information and communication technologies on the learning process have proved that the usage of these technologies lead to great changes in the contents of the learning process as well as in teaching methods and methodology that helps to make radical changes in the construction of teaching the subject [Mashbits, E.I., 1988].

Using this postulate as a basic as well as our practical experience, we have drawn a conclusion that designing and organizing the distance support in the mother tongue learning is very close to planning and organizing the training learning. In particular, the effective learning process organisation in distance learning is possible under the following conditions.

1. Firstly, it is necessary to formulate not only the general academic purpose, but also the purpose of each lesson. The peculiarity here, which distinguishes the teaching with distance support from the traditional learning, is that learners must form the purposes by themselves. Or it is also possible that they may also accept some purposes suggested by the teacher. In learning with distance support and in training the learners' need to know how their efforts would be rewarded is observed more deliberately. As a result of their activities learners should be said what skills and knowledge they would acquire at the lesson, how they might use them in practice, and the development of what skills they should especially pay attention to.

The methodological basis of distance learning is similar to the one of training learning in the fact that they both are aimed at the subject who really cares for the needed knowledge, skills, experience etc. Practice shows that the learners in senior classes do not have any definite purposes, which they want to achieve while learning mother tongue.

We must note here that the traditional learning does not allow learners to choose what they want to learn on their own. Hence, while organizing the learning process with distance support, it is necessary to form a new type behavior, when learners can make their own choice. For this, learners should be questioned before every lesson and there should be some summing up at the end of the lesson (a sort of feedback) to record the increase (or its absence) in every learner's knowledge and skills after each lesson.

Purpose formulation can be replaced by learners' report about their expectations. These reports are important for the further work, even if the learners' expectations are quite different to what the teacher planned to achieve. They can be saved written on the blackboard or paper, or in the network course.

2. At the beginning of learning, when learners are not able yet to plan their activities and formulate their learning purposes, the teacher/tutor has to substantiate his/her choice of learning purposes. Learners who participate in the learning process with distance support should know why the particular learning purposes have been chosen. Hence, it is essential to formulate general academic purposes so that the participants could see their topicality and importance.

It should be noted here that for learners (training participants) it is important to know if the knowledge and skills they already have are taken into account. For this purpose, the first lessons involve some preliminary tasks, including learners' description of their work experience with the computer, software and Internet.

3. For distance support (like in training) it is important that students should realize how to achieve the chosen aims. So it is proper here to apply the required explanatory materials in a written or oral form to help learners get rid of fear and anxiety.

4. Distance support like training should have distinct division on the principle "beginning – middle – completion". Besides, the usage of the distance course involves activity algorithmization, i.e. a part of learners' actions are being repeated thought the course: checking e-mail, entering the course using a password and reviewing their marks and assignments for a lesson, etc.

It should be noted that the distance support unlike the classical distance learning, actually, does not allow students to choose time and pace of their work as it is restricted by lesson framework. But, as the assignments are given at the beginning of the lesson, learners can choose their performance tactic (in what order they should fulfill the tasks).

5. Though both the contents and the methods and techniques are equally important in a distance course. And the methods and techniques that have become classical (active on-line and off-line interaction) lose their effectiveness in distance support because of the presence of a real teacher directly. That's why the questions and problem aspects in learning are not mediated with written messages, but are substituted with direct contact. For a number of reasons (loss of time, limited access to the Internet at school, etc), it has not proved to be effective to use mailing lists for problem aspects to be discussed, as well as personal home e-mails.

However, the interactive services like Mail, Forum and Chat can be used if they are placed along with the theoretical materials of the course and linked with the user identification. And in our case, they were widely used. It should be noted here that the application of the interactive services which are actively used by learners outside school (chats, forums) may bring changes in the subordination "teacher – learner" in written communication

through these services. Similar change takes place in training and enables learners to the trainer as their equal. Though, some negative tendencies are observed in distance learning [Rockenbach, B., Almagno, S., 2000], such as aggression, usage of swear words, flames etc. This requires a teacher/tutor to know how to protect himself/herself psychologically and to be able to identify users.

6. Applying a network distance course allows a teacher/tutor to store teaching information as well as practical information and examples, based on students' work. It is possible to correct and enlarge the course contents depending on the participants' aims and expectations.

The course provides a big quantity of didactic information for both categories of users (teachers and learners), such as glossaries and grammar references.

7. For Ukrainian language learning with distance support it is critical to develop a system of exercises involving speaking. Speaking activities are aimed not only at learning monological and dialogical speaking skills but they are a natural and effective way of experience exchange (and accordingly, of education and self-education).

The methodology of the course with distance support also involves elements of psychological training (included on purpose) to influence communicative processes, school anxiety and learners' lack of confidence. The researchers of foreign language distance teaching [Diomkin, V., Gulbinskaya, E., 2001] noted the disappearance of lack of students' confidence that, according to the authors, prevented learners from showing their abilities during the lessons. To achieve this some psychological exercises and tasks were performed at the lessons to teach students interaction, work in teams, ways to resolve conflicts and so on. Such elements of a practical rhetoric as report, presentations, self-presentation, speech deliveries, etc have been used.

Since psychological elements have been included into tasks, being carried out in the distance course frameworks, as well as into the training tasks, it was supposed that the formed skills (with individual preference in different environments) would be transferred, accordingly, to the virtual environment for ones learners and to the real life for other learners.

8. It is also necessary to develop a system of exercises to form a literately correct writing speech. Though, with the distance support, an interaction is mostly performed in writing, learners often use a hybrid of speaking and writing featuring simultaneously the elements of a public, dialogic and monologue speech [Voiskunskiy, A.E., 1991]. Their discourse is characterized by using shortened spoken forms, incorrect grammar constructions, chaotic dialogues, unnecessary emotions that hinder in understanding [Rozina, I.N, 2000].

9. The important and distinguishing feature of distance (as well as training) learning being an active process for the learner, not for the teacher/tutor, is being developed *with difficulties* at school lesson. The possible reasons for this are that learners do not possess enough psychological, personal, emotional, motivational and social readiness to use informational and communication technologies in their education and self-education.

Though, it is only fair to admit that teachers (who do not directly deal with informatics and programming) are not ready to use informational and communication technologies at their lesson either. Though it is the level of teachers' training that affects the quality of the lesson incorporating information and communication technology [Attwell, P., 2001]. The important thing is that using these technologies improves both teachers' and learners' work, the operational structure of their work; effects the motives of their activities, and greatly changes the system of participants' relationship [Mashbits, E.I., 1988].

10. The essential thing in learning with distance support is that learners should have motivations to study (they should be able to see life perspective, formulate their goals, and plan their time, necessary to perform tasks and other activities); they should be ready emotionally to study (self-regulation, composure); possess personal readiness (behavioral and learning reflection and self-reflection, ability to distinguish between the new and previous experience, presence of a researcher's attitude to the unknown, reflection and sensibility towards personal changes); learners should also have informational competence (moral fibre and lasting concentration of attention; ability to pick up the most important things from the message; to search, render and take notes on the information; to build the knowledge scheme on the studied language; critical thinking skills).

Conclusion

According to the results of the performed work we have come to the conclusion that:

1. The realities of an existing education system do not allow, at present, the universal implementation and use of distance learning at school. As one of the directions of such implementation the distance support acts combining elements of traditional training with distance.

2. The distance support is one of the desirable forms of distance learning implementation in the secondary school educational process as it helps to keep a balance between the standardized school learning and tendency towards individualized learning; it also can eliminate faults of technical equipment (and also errors in its work) though presence of a real teacher in the classroom.
3. A well-organized distance learning of Ukrainian language may be effective enough if the psychological and pedagogical peculiarities of construction and organization of this form of education are observed.
4. Due to the factors of activity and interactivity the learning with distance support can give relief to the traditional learning process where the reproductive learning method prevails.
5. In the methodology of Ukrainian language learning with distance support, it is required to remember that the communication, both direct and indirect, i.e. through technical environment, between the teacher and the learner remained significant for development of learners' personalities rather than to be just a tool to receive the information on the subject.
6. It is necessary to develop such types of assignments within Ukrainian language learning that could be directed to a successful mastering the subject as well as to a development of learners' personalities.
7. To use the distance learning at school (and also its various variants of integration with traditional internal) it is expedient for profile education at the senior school. In this case the abilities of pupils, their interests in the given subject sphere and high motivation of educational activity, personal and emotional maturity will promote a learning efficiency.
8. The learning efficiency also can be increased for the account of subject focused and didactic competent development of the teaching materials including system of practical tasks, the test control, and also a number of the procedures, allowing to make educational process personally more significant for the pupil.

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