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Distance Learning for a Foreign Language in the Postmodern Age and its Forms

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Abstract: The article is devoted to innovative postmodern requests for the liberalization of education. Postmodernism influenced education not only methodologically, but also by changing the very pedagogical culture of teaching. Now the relevance of the research topic is due to the problems of forming information content and methodological support for the introduction of distance learning technology in mobile form. The introduction of IT in education, the improvement of smart devices, the formation of an electronic information and educational environment have created the basis for such forms of education as mobile learning and blended learning. In both cases, the student situationally himself forms the educational process, turns from an object of training into its subject. The humanistic potential of mobile learning in the sense of ensuring equal access to education for people with different abilities is noted. The opinion is expressed about the importance of student motivation and IT competence of teachers to provide information content, intensify the introduction of e-learning and mobile-oriented learning technologies. It is argued that learning based only on mobile learning technology, using smart devices without classroom or office work, real communication with the teacher is not didactically self-sufficient, which would provide adequate language skills. Effectiveness in learning foreign languages is achieved by synergy of technologies distance mobile and traditional classroom or classroom training, real communication with the teacher.

Keywords: *mobile learning; IT; motivation; smart devices, liberalization of education, traditional forms of education.*

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Introduction

The information society is increasingly acquiring the characteristics of a knowledge society in which education is a strategic resource for social development. Postmodernism as a global phenomenon makes knowledge of a foreign language one of the key components of any professional competence. At present, linguodidactics is on the cutting edge of the issues studied by scientists-educators. Objective circumstances have exacerbated the need for accelerated introduction of distance learning technologies. The renewal of didactics is taking place against the background of the IT breakthrough in all spheres of social life and education in the first place. Modern linguodidactics is characterized by pragmatism and reaches a new level of methods of teaching foreign languages. The very philosophy of education is changing. IT is not only a new opportunity in language didactics, but also a radical change in public consciousness and, in fact, pedagogical culture. So "... one of our obligations as educators is to consider how the mobile Internet changes not only how we teach, but what it means to be knowledgeable and educated in our culture" (Parry, 2011, pp. 15–16). These words of Parry (2011), a well-known researcher of the impact of the digital network on social processes, aim us to highlight the still unexplored effects of distance learning and mobile access to electronic information resources on the educational process in its socio-pedagogical context.

Education has always been a driving force for progress and should evolve ahead of the challenges of the times. Therefore, it is natural that the technology of distance learning and its mobile forms entails a shift of emphasis from paper to the formation of an open electronic educational resource: textbooks, manuals, online courses, multimedia applications, etc., which are freely available. But in addition to the educational resource, the reorientation of education to e-learning has necessitated the provision of guidelines for the use of IT, which determines the relevance of the topic of the article.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Information and communication technologies are the subject of discussion of many scientists, teachers, methodologists. Research on IT, mobile learning and blended learning was conducted by both foreign and Ukrainian scientists. In particular, the theory and practice of introducing mobile and blended learning are disclosed by Ostrovska (2020), Horbatiuk, & Tulashvili (2013), Hockly (2012), Parry (2011); the formation of electronic information resources of academic disciplines – by Bykov, & Yatsyshyn (2019), Hurzhii, & Lapinsky (2013), Hurzhii, Kartashova, & Lapinskyi (2013),

Stezhko (2019), Nerubasska & Maksymchuk (2020), Melnyk et al. (2019), Sheremet, Leniv, Loboda, & Maksymchuk (2019), Gerasymova et al. (2019), Tovkanets (2017); the problem of motivation for autonomous learning – by Timofeeva (2019), Horbatiuk, & Tulashvili (2013); problems of IT readiness of teachers – by Hurzhii, Kartashova, & Lapinskyi (2013), Rybalko, Chernovol-Tkachenko, & Gorbacheva (2019); development of an interdisciplinary IT-project of interaction between teachers and students – by Hlazunova, Voloshyna, & Korolchuk (2020). It is worth noting the achievements of the team of scientists from the Institute of Information Technology and Teaching Aids of Ukraine (Bykov & Yatsyshyn, 2019).

The authors of the article relied on the analysis of the latest foreign theoretical and practical achievements in distance mobile learning. In particular, the following works were studied by Azizi, Rassaei, & Bagheri (2020) (they investigate the understanding of mobile mediated language learning among Iranian English as a Foreign Language (EFL) learners); Ferreira, Moreira, Pereira, & Durão (2015) (they examine the evolution of mobile technologies in Higher Education Institutions (HEI) in Portugal); Alwaely (2018) (the researcher studies challenges of WhatsApp use as an educational tool in Jordan); Pratsri, & Nilsook (2020) (they study HEI digital learning platform online instruction); Upadhyay (2018) (the researcher studies the usage of Twitter as a language tool); Nail & Ammar (2017), Chen, Seilhamer, Bennett, & Bauer (2015) (they study the implementation experience of students mobile training); Mobo (2020) (the researcher studies learning through electronic media); Mwakapina, Mhandeni, & Nyinondi (2016), Peng, Su, Chou, & Tsai (2009) (they study interactive teaching).

However, it is not necessary to talk about the exhaustiveness of the topic of distance learning and its forms, as there are ongoing discussions about the effectiveness, limits and feasibility of their introduction into education. Therefore, we intend to express some considerations about the peculiarities of distance and mobility of learning foreign languages in Ukrainian realities in our article.

Therefore, we have the educational process as the **object** of research, and the form of distance learning as the **subject**.

The aim is to investigate the didactic features of mobile and mixed forms of distance learning, which ensure the productivity of educational services and to outline the permissible limits of their effective use.

Research methods: The main methods are general scientific methods of ascent from the abstract to the concrete, the method of

induction, analogy, reduction and linguistic, such as: evaluation, contextual-interpretive, recursive methods.

Mastering the technologies of distance and mobile learning

Mobile assisted language learning (MALL) technology was first used in US universities at the end of the last century; in Ukrainian educational institutions so far we have isolated cases of mastering the technologies of distance and mobile learning and scientific and practical discussions about its fruitfulness. But even in the United States, even after many years of using mobility technology in foreign language learning, there is still controversy over its coordination with other forms of learning. «This refers to the ability of mobile learning to encompass both formal learning within the classroom, and informal and formal learning outside the classroom, across myriad devices, in a variety of physical and temporal arenas. Interaction with mobile devices is only one part of the picture; of key importance in any discussion of mobile learning are the interactions that it supports and the ways in which these lead to learning (Hockly, 2012, p. 1).

There is also no unanimity among Ukrainian educators in assessing the effectiveness and acceptable limits in the use of mobile learning. Let us agree, like any other innovation, mobility in mastering a foreign language has both advantages and disadvantages, which we intend to highlight when considering them in the context of Ukrainian realities. Taking into account only the advantages or, conversely, the disadvantages is not legitimate.

Undoubtedly, mobile-oriented learning technologies are a promising area of innovative development of education both didactically and in terms of information accessibility and social significance. Currently, Ukrainian universities are implementing a project of open educational resources on the basis of ICT, which is available to any user of the Internet. This resource is constantly replenished and adapted to the relevant foreign language programs according to the chosen specialty. A more open educational resource provided by the UNESCO Institute for Information Technology (UNESCO IITE, 2019), which can be adapted to national requirements as needed. Due to information accessibility, e-learning technology has a significant humanistic potential - "the emergence of digital educational resources (DER) as components of informatization of education provides access to knowledge, development of intellectual and creative abilities of students through individualization of learning, intensification of educational process, etc." (Hurzhii et al., 2013, p. 6). The humanistic value of "individualization of learning", as well as the distance itself is to equalize access to learning for all who seek it. The mobile form of distance education

has acquired special significance for the practical implementation of inclusive education, which is reflected in the public consciousness by a higher manifestation of humanism. While the traditional educational process of classroom reproduction of the teacher's words or what was read in the textbook is not very consistent with the creativity of teaching using modern information and communication technologies, it does not meet the requirements of ensuring equal access to quality education. And with the intellectualization of smart-applications, this inconsistency will only worsen, because it is possible to slow down the process of innovative development of education for a while, but there is no way to stop it, just as not to stop the civilizational progress of postmodernism.

Objectively broad opportunities for responding to the needs of a modern person, to the demands of the liberal doctrine of postmodernism arose with the development of information and communication technologies and the availability of smart devices. Therefore, the concept of smart education has become a natural response to the need to expand the source base of information, save time, teach creativity, and the like. Agree that with the modern pace of life, the increase in the volume of the study load round-the-clock access to information resources and Internet services, the ability to personally distribute your time between study and leisure is certainly a great achievement. The main ideological attitude of postmodernism is being realized - "freedom to be yourself". With such IT autonomy, the student appears as a co-author of the educational process, an actively acting subject of learning, and not its object.

The organization of learning takes place as a subjective choice of options (mobile learning) and (blended learning) - when the student situationally shapes the learning process. Such pedagogy provides the subject with the right to identity and uniqueness.

Mobility provides an invaluable opportunity at any time, anywhere to study audition or use Skype, Viber, Outlook or Zoom in dialogue with other students or teachers and even to form your information resource on cloud technologies. If desired, the student has the opportunity to provide information about themselves on social networks such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, which provide unlimited opportunities to communicate with students, even in other countries. However, we need to focus on the importance of IT in foreign language teaching. Thanks to the mobile smart-device the interactivity which has essential linguodidactic potential is provided. Smart-applications allow you to listen to authentic texts or teacher's instructions, as well as the practice of listening to your own repetitions, thereby improving pronunciation.

Distance education and traditional forms of learning on the basis of direct communication with the teacher in the classroom

However, it would be appropriate to ask whether distance education and mobile learning in particular can completely replace traditional forms of learning on the basis of direct communication with the teacher in the classroom or with the use of a language classroom? As for us, no. Is there a cloudless future for mobile learning in Ukraine? Doubtful. Consider some of the points that give rise to these doubts.

Teaching based only on the use of smartphones, like other technical means, is not didactically self-sufficient, such that it would provide the necessary knowledge of the language without classroom or office work. Perhaps this is why voices are growing louder in favor of using blended learning as a more effective technology to combine, say, desk learning with distance, autonomous learning.

By definition, Ostrovska (2020) "mixed (combined, hybrid) learning - is a combination of traditional organization of the educational process with online learning. "Mixing" takes place at the level of teaching methods and types of work, learning environment and subjects, the format of educational materials and access to them, where an important condition is to work with Internet resources (Ostrovska, 2020, p. 222). To access the Internet resource, which Ostrovska (2020) identifies as an important condition for information support of education, and there are complaints, because not all schools have access to the Internet, especially those far from urban centers. In addition, any technical means only contribute to the effectiveness of learning (lexical and phonetic on the samples of authentic texts), and the determining controlling, corrective, and most importantly, motivating role invariably belongs to the teacher, who has both traditional learning and user skills relevant mobile applications that make the smartphone really smart.

In addition to objective factors, the assessment of mobile and distance learning in general should be noted and subjective. It is first of all about the readiness of teachers themselves for such innovations. It should be noted with regret that currently not all educators have the proper experience of distance and mobile learning. There is also a lack of necessary work on practical recommendations for its use. At the same time, let's agree that "the classroom activities outlined above suggest a certain amount of familiarity with mobile devices on the part of teachers and learners. This familiarity, which we can refer to as "mobile literacy", is an increasingly important skill" (Hockly, 2012, p. 4). Therefore, the agenda is a priority issue of theoretical modernization of knowledge of the pedagogical community.

Ignorance of a certain layer of teachers in the field of IT, and, as a consequence, latent resistance to innovation, are almost the main brake on the introduction of distance learning in Ukrainian schools. Therefore, "the reorientation of the thinking of a modern foreign language teacher to the awareness of fundamentally new requirements for his pedagogical activity - in particular - readiness to use IT" (Hurzhii et al., 2013, pp. 11–12) acquires special significance.

Distance learning requires evaluative thinking, the formation of so-called design thinking, focused on combining their own interests, intelligence with the capabilities of information and communication technologies, understanding that stopping the innovative development of education, introduction of new learning technologies and technological progress is impossible. We need to improve our professional level, adapt to new working conditions, constantly monitor the smart potential of mobile devices, track the appearance of new mobile Learning apps on the Internet. To ensure a high professional level, the scientific and pedagogical community should join the annual conferences held by UNESCO to exchange world experience and expand basic knowledge on the implementation of ICT in education, guided by UNESCO recommendations (UNESCO IITE, 2019). One should not lose sight of the fact that "... the modernization of teacher education presupposes, first of all, special attention to the training of highly qualified teaching personnel" (Tovkanets, 2017, p. 247).

We also have reservations about uncritical assumptions about the unbridled desire for extracurricular learning of students themselves. Liberalization of learning conditions requires the development of motivators understandable to the student. Motivation is known to be a determining factor in the effectiveness of any form of learning. "Motives are a factor that can and should be influenced to achieve this goal. At the same time, for the optimal organization of the educational process it is important first of all to have a deep knowledge of the motives of learning, and, secondly, the ability to correctly identify them and manage them wisely" (Timofeeva, 2019, p. 193). Human nature is such that it is active in terms of personal interest in the results of activities, their compliance with their own value orientations. Therefore, in terms of "reasonable leadership" motives (Timofeeva, 2019), we can note the creation of incentives to learn the language by involving texts, the subject of which would be in the interests of the student in terms of future professional self-realization and leisure. We can also talk about creating interest on the basis of outlining the problem situation (problem-based learning) taking into account the personal value of the student or his

encouragement to English self-expression, presentation of creative projects, etc., using the service, say, Web 2.0.

And vice versa. Methodists-organizers of mobile learning should not discount the factors that demotivate students. According to the analysis of foreign experience, there are cases when the use of smart devices with geolocation function is psychologically regarded as an encroachment on the independence of the individual, as an interference in the personal life of the student and his environment, which, of course, does not encourage mobile learning. Postmodernism debunks the modernist notion of freedom as a conscious necessity. Instead, new values of freedom are affirmed - individual uniqueness, unlimited communication.

Finally, about the Ukrainian opportunities for the implementation of emerging values in e-learning technology. Currently in Ukraine there is a situation when the volume of services in the IT market significantly exceeds their consumption by education, a situation in which the opinions of e-learning experts differ. According to some, these differences give hope for improving the quality of IT services and reducing the cost of the resource. According to others, the differences between demand and supply of IT, excess supply over demand, unclaimed services are evidence of insufficient development of educational technologies, an indicator of untapped didactic opportunities that open up to IT education. We are inclined to the opinion of others, because, let's face it, objectively, Ukrainian education lags behind the world's leading practices in using the capabilities of smart devices. But can this lag be seen as a definitely negative indicator? As for us, no. We must keep in mind the psychological factor of the implementation of increasingly intelligent smart devices in the learning process. Against the background of the undoubted advantages of mobile-oriented learning technologies, a psychological problem is ripening - the loss of the meaning of learning, the desire to shift one's own cognitive functions to artificial intelligence or the collective mind of crowdsourcing, in which the status of education dissolves. Already today, a person can not bother memorizing lexical material for translation, relying on a smart device. According to Vysotska (2018), "computerization of society has led to the transformation of the nature of storage and transmission of information, which, of course, has led to a number of crises in education - from the crisis of reading and writing, memory problems, distraction and lowering the threshold of text perception. educational material for modern children, to the systemic crisis of formal education at all levels..." (p. 3). Indeed, it is difficult to deny that "the easiest way of thinking overcomes the more difficult..." (Nietzsche, 2005, p. 304), as well as because there is a real threat that artificial intelligence, initiated by

man himself, will displace his needs, interests, spirituality from the information environment... ” (Stezhko, 2019, p. 16). And this should be kept constantly in the field of view of developers of information technology training. But is the threat so inevitable? As for us - no. In fact, as practice shows, the introduction of smart education, the situation is not so threatening if we direct the needs of students in the direction of the formation of a new intellectualism, which is talking about postmodernists. The grains of the "economy of thinking" inherent in man, falling on the fertile ground of the possibilities of smart-technologies, give the fruits of a new intellectualism, which elevates man above the rationality and logic of artificial intelligence. It is not legitimate, in our opinion, to evaluate smart education only in terms of possible losses. For certain losses, the gains are clearly visible. Smart-technologies free thinking from routine, act in favor of creative production of knowledge. Modern IT-competent student instead of the ability to think at the level of a routine algorithm of rationalism is more capable of creativity in the development of IT projects, which requires an order of magnitude higher intellectual level. So, the traditional criteria for assessing the intellectual level by the standards of "dosmart" technologies is not acceptable. Agree that “if we want our future IT specialists to take leadership positions in their professional activities in this industry and to meet the requirements of customers, it is also necessary to develop the students' ability to solve complex integrated specialized tasks in the process of training, to apply modern methods and technologies for developing IT solutions ... ” (Hlazunova et al., 2020, p. 2). Now the task of the teacher is to nullify possible losses, to motivate the need for learning, to provide a vision every time of new horizons of knowledge, like the Socratic attitude to "knowledge of their ignorance." Remember the regularity that each new generation is more progressive in relation to the previous one, since in “filmed form” it contains the achievements of all previous generations, just like an information civilization of a higher quality according to the previous one.

Thus, in order to achieve the desired result from the introduction of e-learning in all its manifestations and requirements to bring efficiency to the best achievements of world practice, Ukrainian education must overcome a number of obstacles, both objective and subjective. "Obviously, an important condition is the availability of an appropriate experimental base for conducting pedagogical experiments at the necessary levels of organization of the pedagogical process, in particular in school, extracurricular, vocational, higher and postgraduate education, distance education, self-education, adult education" (Bykov & Yatsyshyn, 2019, p. 9).

At present, due to objective circumstances, almost the entire Ukrainian education system has become such an experimental base with results that have not yet been fully studied.

Conclusions

In summary, in general, distance learning of foreign languages using mobile devices has significant didactic potential: it intensifies learning, fills it with postmodern humanism, provides language practice, and therefore is a promising area of development of educational technologies that can be extended to other subjects. The main thing is not to cross the line beyond which the advantages turn into disadvantages; with an uncritical assessment of smart technologies, they may be assigned an uncharacteristic role, they may be endowed with uncharacteristic opportunities, which will only harm learning. Educational IT should not be seen as an end in itself, but rather as a means to an end. A benchmark in assessing the effectiveness of educational technologies should be the formation of a new type of students' intellectualism as the ability to creatively participate in the development and application of IT projects, which requires an order of magnitude higher intellectual level than thinking according to the algorithm.

In addition, it is worth keeping in mind the fact that with the real progressiveness, comfort of the mobile form of distance learning of foreign languages, it is not self-sufficient. Remember that any new technology that claims to be progressive must absorb the best of the previous one. Their effectiveness, read synergies, distance, mobility are achieved in combination with classroom, classroom learning, real communication with the teacher (synergy of artificial and human intelligence in educational technologies). It is the teacher who formulates the task, reveals the connection of the chosen topic with the general course and previous topics, gives an explanation of specific terms of a foreign language in the specialty, activates communication, creates a situation of interest in cognition. So, in general, only having positive answers to the question of whether all students have real access to Internet services, whether the teacher has the opportunity at any time to intervene in the learning process, provide the necessary advice and how corrective interaction with students can be chosen or another form of learning technology.

And finally. The time of postmodernism is coming to an end. Therefore, it is not known exactly what new challenges the coming era will pose for teachers, but today education should provide forecasts regarding the needs of the future "knowledge society". Therefore, we see the prospect of developed research on mobile learning in the deepening of theoretical

research based on the study of empirical material, generalization of foreign experience in order to enhance the effectiveness of teaching foreign languages, adapting the IT competence of teachers and students to the technology of distance, mobile learning, based on forecasts for the future.

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