

TEACHING A FOREIGN LANGUAGE FOR YOUNG LEARNERS IN THE SYSTEM OF DISTANCE EDUCATION

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Abstract: The article gives information about the possibilities and advantages of distance learning for teaching foreign language to young learners, the problems of creating a distance course and changing the role of a teacher in the distance education. Effective distance learning for teaching foreign language for young learners should be based on a specially designed virtual language environment, including a set of electronic educational and communication tools that allow organizing a full-fledged educational interaction between the subjects of the educational process separated by space and time.

Key words: young learners, distance education, foreign language, distance learning, computer, computer technologies, virtual language environment, case, educational process.

Introduction

At the present stage of development of society, information technologies have a great impact on our life, in this situation. Modern world educational standards are aimed at training a highly qualified, thinking person and creatively developed, capable of quickly adapting in the world [1]. Modern young learners need a more flexible that allows them to get basic or additional education without interrupting their main activities, as well as providing equal opportunities to residents of all regions, including those remote from cultural and educational centers. Along with this, the need of young learners to create conditions for lifelong education and training, increasing the time of their adaptation to the requirements of the labor market, is becoming more and more obvious. The processes taking place in society require changes in the education system, make us look for new ways of its development, in which the need of an individual is decisive. At the same time, the achievement of a new level of accessibility of education should be accompanied by an increase in its quality.

The task of effectively organizing the learning process in conditions of practically independent educational activity of young learners is complicated by the peculiarities of language teaching. The peculiarity of the “foreign language” discipline is that the goal of training is not so much knowledge about the subject itself (language competence), but the development of certain skills and abilities of various types of speech activity (communicative competence). These include the ability to extract sufficiently complete information when reading foreign-language texts, the ability to understand the interlocutor, as well as express your thoughts orally and in writing. Due to the specifics of a foreign language as a subject, the psychological characteristics of mastering it as a means of communication, it is impossible to directly transfer models of distance education of a

lecture type that are relevant to theoretical disciplines into teaching it. In this regard, the search for optimal forms of distance learning a foreign language is a priority task.

Effective distance learning of a foreign language should be based on a specially designed virtual language environment, including a set of electronic educational and communication tools that allow organizing a full-fledged educational interaction between the subjects of the educational process separated by space and time. At the same time, distance learning should provide qualitative and quantitative control of the success of the remote educational process. Only in this case such functions of the virtual educational environment as information and training, communication and control and administrative [1] will be realized.

Main part

The foreign language program for young learners sets practical language proficiency as the main goal of training. While the priority task of practical knowledge of a foreign language in distance learning is the ability to search and extract professional information from original foreign language sources. The possibilities of computer technology in teaching reading and developing skills in various types of reading are enormous. The computer allows young learners to create an extensive text base and provide it with a system of various exercises appropriate for each type of speech activity. As for professionally-oriented communication, practice has shown that even with a sufficient vocabulary and a good knowledge of grammatical structures and the rules for their application, young learners experience significant difficulties in the process of communication, while there is an incorrect speech of students in terms of language norms. This is quite natural. As you know, three aspects of a conversation (pronunciation, lexical, grammatical) and three types of skills traditionally distinguished by the technique (phonetic, lexical and grammatical) are involved in the conversation. It is unnatural to separate them. The study of individual aspects of the language system leads to the fact that a living language appears to the learner as a kind of mechanical aggregate, consisting of isolated elements, to which a number of rules-instructions for their connection are attached. Moreover, a skill formed in non-verbal conditions is not strong and “incapable of transference” [2]. Therefore, an integrated approach to learning seems to be the most productive, which involves the simultaneous and parallel mastery of language material and speech activity in conditions that are as close as possible to real communication. It is computer programs that combine graphic images, sound, text material that are capable of “immerse” trainees in a living language of communication, promote the formation of speech skills in the conditions of their functioning. They are able to ensure the use of each separate grammatical form in a series of exercises, where the same communicative intention is realized in changing situations. Nevertheless, at present, in distance learning a foreign language, text and graphic forms of presentation of educational material prevail. Therefore, when creating distance learning programs, it is necessary to combine audio, video and text.

It would be a mistake to completely ignore teaching writing in distance learning, since written communication, written speech for an adult educated person is an urgent need. However, teaching writing in this case excludes any formal operations, for example, special training in writing letters or words to develop writing techniques. Here, written assignments should always carry a semantic load and be carried out within the framework of personal communication. Both the volume and the lexical completeness can vary. At the initial stage, it is important that the

material for the implementation of the written assignment is contained in educational tests and, with the help of minor modifications, can be used to answer the proposed questions. This is not about calligraphy: spelling is taught along the way, according to the principle of analogy and imitation, that is, copying words and fragments of text. With distance learning, written assignments can be of the nature of correspondence on the Internet, while the exchange of letters involves mastering the written way of formulating one's thoughts. Even if ready-made blocks from educational texts are used in letters, their use will be purely individual: different students use different phrases and in different contexts. And one more type of writing is tests. This is a test of the knowledge gained and formed skills, so there is no question of formulating your own thoughts, but they require the written use of the necessary word forms.

Special attention should be paid to the possibility of automating the knowledge control procedure when using computer technologies. After studying the full course and completing all the exercises and tests of the lesson or module, the registered student is assessed by the distance education system as a person who has completed this lesson in full. Thus, the problem of remote control of the quality of knowledge assimilation and progress is being solved. The technologies at the heart of distance learning free the teacher from tedious homework and tests by entrusting it to a computer. In addition, this circumstance (the presence of tracking systems for the completeness and quality of the course) is a powerful psychological factor that stimulates the high-quality mastering of a foreign language by a student.

For the educational process, especially in the context of distance learning for adults, the organization of the very environment in which this process takes place plays an important role. For many years, this topic has been studied by S.M. Zorin [5]. Proceeding from the fact that psychophysiological support of students, management of state and attention are needed to maximize the activation of the learning process and the creative potential of the individual, he developed technical means of controlling the state of students. These include the installation of a controlled color climate to create the required brightness and spectral composition in the classroom, which is especially important in the evening hours of classes. And this is exactly the time when students of correspondence and distance learning are usually engaged. Here, the capabilities of the computer are also not limited: creation of dynamic light compositions on the screen, which, combined with specific sounds, music, speech, will set real conditions for speech situations; the use of pause films to switch attention and relaxation of students in the learning process and much more. All elements of technical means of state control serve as a means of increasing the comfort of the educational process, protecting the psyche of students from overload, preventing fatigue and partial relief of fatigue, and also contribute to the activation of the student's potential capabilities.

Based on the above, the advantages of distance learning a foreign language are obvious. Young learners have the opportunity to study in a convenient place and at a convenient time for themselves, as well as at their own pace and rhythm, while the distance from the student's location to the university is not an obstacle to an effective educational process. Due to the technical and content interactivity of the process, students can interact with the teacher individually. In addition, from a set of independent course modules, they have the opportunity to form a curriculum that meets their individual needs. As a result, the costs of both the student and the education system for the implementation of training are reduced due to the most efficient use of training space, time and technical means. However, despite the undoubted advantages of multimedia and the latest

computer technologies, even with distance learning, one should not completely abandon other teaching methods for foreign language. It should be noted that within the framework of distance learning, it is necessary to comprehensively use computer technology and multimedia for seminars and conferences and in real time. In the case of a closed system “computer – student” or “teacher – student”, one cannot count on the formation of an adequate self-esteem of the student. The active interaction of students in real time generates in each of them the need for a more accurate perception of themselves and their fellow students, which stimulates the processes of self-regulation.

Collective cognitive activity develops the ability to correctly perceive others and adequately assess oneself and the results of one’s activity [7]. Learning interaction with other trainees, even if not in real, but in a virtual “classroom”, enables everyone to see themselves correctly, to predict their behavior. This is especially important due to the specifics of the “Foreign language” subject. With the widespread use of computer technology, the emphasis shifts from teaching to learning. The student becomes the central figure, with the primary responsibility for learning. The teacher ceases to be a source of knowledge, with distance learning this role is transferred to the created teaching computer programs. It is freed from guardianship functions and becomes a “guide” of the student in the learning process, its main function is to organize and manage the educational process.

The organization of teaching a foreign language in the distance education system requires high labor costs at the first stages of course creation, since distance learning makes new demands on educational materials. They must be readable; contain the setting of goals, requirements for the skills and abilities being formed, clear recommendations and advice on what to do, how to avoid mistakes, what to pay special attention to [6]. The developed course should contain authentic factual material, a wide range of situational tasks and exercises based on figurative clarity; to provide the possibility of multiple repetition of the material in order to memorize it and form the necessary skill or skill.

What are some keys to successful distance learning programs?

- Live interaction between the instructor and the students during the course.
- The presence of a classroom teacher in the remote sites who is involved in the learning process. In some cases, these cooperating or coordinating teachers are studying the language along with the students with the intention of completing a teaching minor.
 - The regular use of other media, such as computers, speech recognition devices, audiotapes, and workbooks in a comprehensive approach to distance learning.
 - The involvement and support of school administrators.
 - The use of electronic mailboxes (which all students and cooperating site teachers use), or a toll-free phone number with recording machine [3].

The process of creating a distance course goes through a number of stages from formulating the initial idea and highlighting the main goal to programming and digitizing the content; creating images and sound; assembling ready-made materials into modules and adjusting navigation [4].

Conclusion

Taking into account all of the above, it should be concluded that distance learning is a step forward. However, it is necessary to develop such a model of distance learning of a foreign language in a university that would allow, while retaining all its positive elements, to cope with some of the listed difficulties. Moreover, from a technical point of view, there are no obstacles to distance learning by educational institutions. The infrastructure required for this (Internet, user workstations, free audio and video communication software Skype) is already in place. With the effective organization and widespread dissemination of the academic computer network, despite the high initial cost of developing materials, economy and low cost of training can be achieved for each individual student with a large number of students through the extensive use of the same teaching materials and computer training programs.

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