

## Artículo de investigación

**Distance learning in Russia in the context of learning foreign languages**

Дистанционное образование в России в контексте обучения иностранным языкам

Aprendizaje a distancia en Rusia en el contexto del aprendizaje de lenguas extranjeras

Recibido: 30 de junio del 2019      Aceptado: 09 de agosto del 2019

Written by:

Yuriy A. Moroz<sup>104</sup>Tatiana P. Gordienko<sup>105</sup>Valeria E. Hrabrova<sup>106</sup>Olga A. Medvedeva<sup>107</sup>**Abstract**

Every year the interest of youth in a foreign language as a means of international communication increases. New professions arise that require knowledge of a foreign language. Knowledge of a foreign language is a mandatory requirement for business communication and running anywhere in the world, evidence, and guarantee of competitiveness, professional socialization of the modern young generation. One of the priority tasks of the language training system is the improvement of teaching methods, the search for innovative methods, and advanced technologies for teaching languages. The article describes the current trends in Russian education, which are associated with the spread of distance education. It is proved that distance education is becoming increasingly important in terms of language training. It is shown that modern trends in education are associated, first of all, with the need to overcome the contradictions between the content of training and the requirements for the personality of the future specialist, the traditional organization of the educational process and the patterns of interpersonal and intercultural interaction.

**Key Words:** Distance education system, modern Russian education system, foreign languages, methods and techniques of teaching foreign languages.

**Аннотация**

С каждым годом увеличивается интерес молодежи к иностранному языку как средству международного общения. Появляются новые специальности, требующие владения иностранным языком.

Знание второго и последующих языков – это обязательное требование для делового общения и ведения бизнеса в любой точке мира, свидетельство и залог конкурентоспособности, профессиональной социализации современного молодого поколения.

Одними из приоритетных задач системы языковой подготовки являются совершенствование методов обучения, поиск инновационных методов и передовых технологий обучения языкам.

В данной статье описываются современные тенденции российского образования, связанные с распространением дистанционного обучения. Доказывается, что дистанционное обучение приобретает все большее значение в плане языковой подготовки. Показано, что современные тенденции в образовании связаны, в первую очередь, с необходимостью преодоления противоречий между содержанием подготовки и требованиями к личности будущего специалиста, традиционной организацией образовательного процесса и закономерностями межличностного и межкультурного взаимодействия.

**Ключевые слова:** система дистанционного обучения, система современного российского образования, иностранные языки, методы и приемы обучения иностранным языкам

<sup>104</sup> Institute of Social Sciences and International Relations, Sevastopol State University; Email: yu\_moroz@mail.ru

<sup>105</sup> Crimean Engineering and Pedagogical University; Email: tatgordienko@gmail.com

<sup>106</sup> Institute of Humanities and Pedagogics of Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of Higher Education Sevastopol State University; Email: hrabrova\_ve@gmail.com

<sup>107</sup> Institute of Humanities and Pedagogics of Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution of Higher Education Sevastopol State University; Email: pedagogical\_education@gmail.com

## Resumen

Cada año aumenta el interés de los jóvenes en un idioma extranjero como medio de comunicación internacional. Surgen nuevas profesiones que requieren el conocimiento de un idioma extranjero. El conocimiento de un idioma extranjero es un requisito obligatorio para la comunicación empresarial y la ejecución en cualquier parte del mundo, evidencia y garantía de competitividad, socialización profesional de la generación joven moderna. Una de las tareas prioritarias del sistema de capacitación en idiomas es la mejora de los métodos de enseñanza, la búsqueda de métodos innovadores y las tecnologías avanzadas para la enseñanza de idiomas. El artículo describe las tendencias actuales en la educación rusa, que están asociadas con la difusión de la educación a distancia. Está comprobado que la educación a distancia se está volviendo cada vez más importante en términos de capacitación en idiomas. Se muestra que las tendencias modernas en educación están asociadas, en primer lugar, con la necesidad de superar las contradicciones entre el contenido de la capacitación y los requisitos para la personalidad del futuro especialista, la organización tradicional del proceso educativo y los patrones de interpersonal e interacción intercultural.

**Palabras clave:** Sistema de educación a distancia, sistema moderno de educación rusa, lenguas extranjeras, métodos y técnicas de enseñanza de lenguas extranjeras.

## Introduction

The Russian Federation is faced with an acute problem of finding new ways of learning foreign languages and obtaining language education. Changing the socio-cultural context of learning leads to the search for new content and new methods of teaching foreign languages.

One of the latest and highly sought-after forms of education is distance education, which puts a premium on the task of timely scientific understanding of this problem. The need to develop a system of teaching foreign languages using distance methods is not only related to the growth of scientific interest in this problem, since, according to statistics, distance education is most needed by the younger generation, but also due to the emerging need in a market economy and fierce competition in the labor market languages, along with such qualities of individuals as the ability to work in a team, initiative, agility, etc. We note, as one of the reasons, the shortage (especially in districts remote from the center) of highly qualified teachers of foreign languages.

Despite the relevance and high demand, the very existence and individual modifications of distance education cause the most heated debates among researchers.

Language training is currently a priority of state policy in the Russian Federation. The concept of development of the distance education system developed and approved by the Government and the President is aimed at solving socially significant tasks:

- 1) Increasing the level and quality of education;

- 2) Meeting the needs of the population for high-quality educational services regardless of place of residence;
- 3) Solving the problem of training specialists and staff potential;
- 4) Preservation and enhancement of knowledge accumulated by the education system;
- 5) The development of a single educational space in Russia, the CIS, and the entire world community.

### The concept and purpose of "distance education".

Since 1995, the humanization of education has led to the spreading of distance education in the Russian educational space.

Distance education means a set of educational services that are provided to the general population "with the help of specialized information and educational environment, based on the means of sharing remotely regulatory and distribution information (satellite, television, radio-computer communications, etc.).

In European countries, the term "distance learning" is used to characterize distance learning, and "distance education" is used to characterize distance education. The distinction between these terms is due to the fact that European education is focused on the learning process as mastering a certain set of knowledge and skills.

The main objectives of distance learning of foreign languages are “the focus of the education system on the implementation of national interests in Russia and its competitiveness in world labor markets” (Safonova, 1996). The main goal of teaching foreign languages is the formation and development of the communicative culture of students, the teaching of practical mastery of a foreign language. The task of the education system is to create conditions for the practical acquisition of language for each student, to choose such teaching methods that would allow them to show their activity and creativity.

Critics of distance education believe that it cannot be compared even with correspondence education, since distance education does not provide for obtaining knowledge, especially in the field of foreign languages. Poor quality is associated with a lack of clearly developed teaching methods. The lack of contact between the teacher and the student leads to the fact that knowledge does not have an emotional coloring, which impairs the perception and memorization of the material. Proponents of distance education, on the contrary, believe that it is aimed at unlocking the personality-forming potential of a foreign language as a means of educating a humanistic person prone to intercultural communication and cooperation based on a dialogue of cultures. Introducing distant technologies into the education system requires modern technical training tools connected to the Internet. Technical means of education in the distance education system play the role of an intermediary in the process of information transfer. They perform the role of a teacher - a translator of knowledge and information. However, there are also significant shortcomings of distance education: the lack of dialogue between the student and the teacher leads to the asymmetry of the pedagogical education system, which entails an indirect perception of the real world, and, as a result, isolation from actions, the loss of substantive activity. I. Robert, summarizing numerous studies of psychologists and methodologists, notes the negative phenomena of distance learning, because working with a computer program, that is, in the process of screen creation, replaces the realities of the real world with the models, images or symbols of these objects, which leads to its mediated perception. In addition to all the above, working at a computer is associated with high emotional tension, which is not always good (Robert, 1994).

Due to the development of remote technologies, a change in the form of activity aimed at the independent study of educational material takes place.

During the learning process, the role of the teacher as a facilitator, guiding the learner, is one of the most important. It is not only about the availability of information, but also the correct, selective access to it. The task of the teacher is to activate the student's cognitive activity in the process of teaching foreign languages, which is due to the modification of the content of the teaching of a foreign language, an increase in the volume of the material studied (Ibragimova, 2016; Srivastava, 2016).

A significant role is played by the understanding of information and its appropriate use. Distance education, on the other hand, involves a transition to the independent creation of a learning environment. The latest information technology leads to the fact that “leisure, personal life, thinking, behavior, mood, and all human manifestations are severely forcedly rationed” (Skriabina, 2000). The task of distance technologies is not only to provide knowledge and skills, but also to create conditions for personal development, and to organize it. Educational and cognitive activity in the system of distance education can be presented in the form of a chain: goal – motive – action – means – result – evaluation – reflection – creativity.

#### **Personally-oriented learning in the context of an activity approach to distance learning.**

As V.A. Konev noted, the existing system of Russian education has a number of shortcomings: 1) focus on training and education (focusing on the transfer of specialized knowledge, education does not cope with the increasing amount of knowledge); 2) the mass character of education leads to contradictions with the principles of elitism of education (the implementation of the principle of elitism implies the division of schools into elite and mass ones, which contradicts the idea of democratizing education); 3) decline in the criteria for evaluating knowledge (Konev, 1996). In addition to the above, scientists note a relatively small amount of independent creative work, the discontinuity of training courses and the lack of teamwork skills in both academic and scientific terms (Skriabina, 2000). Distance education is designed to compensate for these shortcomings of the Russian educational system.

According to E.V. Bondarevskaia, the theoretical model of student-centered education should be based on the development and upbringing of the student as a person of culture, associated with the transition from the school of reproduction to the school of understanding (school of thinking) (Bondarevskaia, 1997).

Distance learning, unlike other types of training and contrary to the prevailing opinion in our country, is focused on the personality of students. Its implementation is possible within the framework of the activity approach when the student is considered as a subject who independently builds his own destiny.

Learning a foreign language in the framework of the activity approach allows organizing the learning process with maximum efficiency. Person-oriented learning of foreign languages in distance learning is implemented through the following teaching methods: verbal interaction and systematization of verbal knowledge; deepening and expanding the content of information; stimulation of verbal and cognitive activity by means of technical training aids; standardized control; and intensification of independent work.

The vigorous activity of the learner of a foreign language is aimed at self-development, i.e. student - the subject of activity. Language development involves the formation of speech activity, which contributes to the development of the activity of the subject, creating itself. Language development is a means of formation of speech activity, contributing to the development of verbal, verbal-conceptual, reduced and linguo-creative thinking. Therefore, the learning process includes receptive and reproductive-productive exercises. An important role is played by exercises related to the formation of informative levels (mastering linguistic and cultural information), vocabulary exercises (working out the vocabulary of a particular topic), speech training exercises (mastering speech forms) and speech stimulating (based on presenting information on the screen).

### **The role and importance of distance technology in teaching a foreign language.**

I.A. Zimniaia, developing the teachings of Wilhelm von Humboldt, which consider language as “the repository of the national spirit, culture, the combined spiritual energy of the people, miraculously captured in certain sounds...” (Bozovich, 1968), believes that “language expresses thoughts about objective

reality” (Fisenko et al., 2019). The language reflects the national identity of the people, their national culture. It is languages that “act as carriers of national culture, custodians and means of transmitting all the knowledge accumulated by a human, mediators of interpersonal, interethnic, and intercultural relations” (Bim, 1991).

The study of languages contributes to the formation of linguistic consciousness, a secondary linguistic personality. An effective means of forming ethnic cultural linguistic consciousness is the mass media. Distance education dictates the need to organize the learning process so that the benefits of the information culture are used and language and cultural assimilations are avoided. The system of distance education should be aimed at ensuring that students not only learn the norms of a foreign language and its culture but also could oppose the unconscious acceptance of other cultural values, could determine their point of view on what is happening, based on their own world perception and also possess certain knowledge about the methods of manipulating the consciousness, which corresponds to the provisions of the personality-activity approach, the purpose of which is to create The word for the development of a harmonious personality (Zimniaia, 2000).

L.M. Skriabina treats a person as a system of relations to the world, people, and him-/herself. Students, mastering the first and subsequent foreign languages, tap into a different cultural heritage, which helps to form their special relationship to the world and a sense of belonging not only to a certain linguistic and cultural community, but also to realize themselves as a carrier of universal human values, promoting the development of students' personal qualities, their intellectual and cognitive abilities, emotions, feelings and readiness for communication (Skriabina, 2000).

I.A. Zimniaia believes the subject of speech activity in the practice of learning a foreign language to be:

- a) The need to provide a stimulus for speaking;
- b) The formation of the program of semantic information deployment;
- c) Learning of the means of expressing one's thought;
- d) Learning of the external oral method of forming and formulating thoughts.

The organization of speech activity, according to the researcher, consists of the following phases:

motivational, orienting-research, analytical-synthetic, and executive (Zimniaia, 2000; Kheirabadi & Mirzaei, 2019).

Distance learning allows the student to formulate such personal qualities as purposefulness, attentiveness, and independence in searching for information. Thus, the organization of educational material on the basis of the personality-activity approach in personality-oriented training allows creating conditions for the formation of an active personality. The personality has a distinct individuality and is brought up in the spirit of continuity of generations and national dignity.

#### **Development of distance learning programs for foreign languages.**

When developing educational programs for distance learning of foreign languages, the initial level of the learner must be considered. Within the framework of the activity approach to learning, it is necessary to differentiate the material depending on the degree of proficiency in a foreign language. A significant role is played by the motivational readiness of students to learn. The authors of the course should, at the stage of preparation of the course, predict the results of pedagogical interaction: the knowledge and skills that the learner should acquire, the developmental influence of the presented material. The possibility of phased tracking of the student in the course of learning should be prognostic.

The use of information, communicative and communication technologies requires implementing the following didactic teaching principles: the principle of self-value of the individual; the principle of defining the learner as an active subject; the principle of orientation to self-development, self-learning and the student's self-education; the principle of student socialization; the principle of consideration of the individual psycho-physiological characteristics of the student; and the principle of development of communicative abilities of the individual (Rakitov, 1990).

In student-centered education, depending on the position, the teacher chooses certain forms of organization of educational material. The most successful, however, insufficiently appreciated, are such pedagogical technologies as a method of projects, learning in cooperation, multilevel learning, etc (Zimniaia, 2000). Due to the use of pedagogical technologies focused on distance education, a recipient of educational services is

formed, ready in many respects to independently solve educational problem tasks. However, for successful implementation of the tasks set in the framework of distance education, preliminary pedagogical training of students is necessary. As observations show, excessive tutelage inherent in the class-lesson system of training leads to the fact that students hardly adapt to the requirements of distance learning courses (Polat, 1998).

#### **Conclusions**

The system of education in the Russian Federation is in a state of constant reform, one of the main reasons for which is the task of integration into the global education system. Thus, it becomes necessary to apply new technologies, both from the point of the educational process and from the perception and mastering of information.

The processes of informatization and globalization, peculiar to the world community, has led to a change in educational paradigms. Distance education in the system of teaching foreign languages is becoming an integral part of the modern world educational space. New educational technologies offer innovative models for building such an educational process, where the interrelated activity of a teacher and a student is put in the forefront, aimed at solving both educational and practically significant problems. This does not contradict the creative processes of personal development since each of the pedagogical technologies has its own zone the personal development takes place within. The main thing that characterizes the use of pedagogical technologies in education is fundamentally different foundations of the educational process, a special way of setting pedagogical goals, which consists in the fact that these goals are formulated as the intended result of students' activities in the form of specific skills.

The level and quality of language training determines the solution of issues of personal professional growth; therefore, distance learning in foreign languages should be based on linguocultural and sociocultural competence.

Distant learning of foreign languages as a product of the informatization of education allows for the inclusion of a socio-cultural context in education, which makes it possible to combine learning with upbringing. The effectiveness of distance learning of foreign languages within the framework of student-

centered learning is achieved by including a cultural component.

### Bibliographic references

Bim, I. L. (1991). Methods of teaching foreign languages at high school. *IlaSh*, 5, 11–14

Bondarevskaia, E. V. (1997). The humanistic paradigm of student-centered education. *Pedagogy*, 4, 11-17.

Bozovich, L. I. (1968). *Personality and its development in childhood*. - M., 464 p.

Fisenko, O., Nikitina, V., & Bodrova, T. (2019). Semantic- cognitive approach to the study of a language person in the system of human and individual values. *Revista Inclusiones*, 6, 106–112.

Ibragimova, T. G. (2016). PHATICS - ACTUAL PROBLEMS OF LINGUISTICS UZBEK RESEARCH. *UCT Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Research*, 4(2), 16-19.

Kheirabadi, M. A., & Mirzaei, Z. (2019). Descriptive valuation pattern in education and

training system: a mixed study. *Journal of Humanities Insights*, 3(01), 7-12.

Konev, V. A. (1996). Culture and architecture of pedagogical space. *Voprosy filosofii*, (10), 46-57.

Polat, E. S. (ed). (1998). Distance learning: a study guide, -M.: Humanit. Pub. Center VLADOS, 192 p.

Rakitov, A. I. (1990). Informatization: its condition, structure, and prospects. Perspectives of the informatization of society. - M., 61 p.

Robert, I. V. (1994). Modern information technologies in education: didactic problems; prospects of use. *Shkola-press, Moscow*.

Safonova, V. V. (1996). The study of languages of international communication in the context of the dialogue of cultures and civilizations. *Voronezh: Origins*.

Skriabina, L. M. (2000). Development of the humanistic potential of a primary school student by means of a foreign language. Thesis for the degree of candidate of pedagogical sciences. - Yakutsk, 185 p.

Zimniaia, I. I. (2000). Pedagogical psychology. Textbook for universities. - M.: Logos, 384 p.