

TEACHING AND LEARNING ENGLISH LANGUAGE BY DISTANCE EDUCATION

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Abstract

Distance learning has become an increasingly popular way to learn and teach foreign languages. With the advancement of technology, it is now possible for students and teachers to interact with each other from different parts of the world through various online tools and platforms. This article is aimed to clarify the possibilities of learning language through distance education.

Keywords: EFL, method, technologies, competence, remote learning, language acquisition.

Introduction

English language is considered a predominant language all over the world. Hence, it is obvious that English language is accepted as a dominant language for communication. Furthermore, English language is also the language of science, diplomacy, mass media and world information sources. Therefore, learners show great interest in acquiring this foreign language considerably. The popularity of distance learning for foreign language education has grown significantly as technology has advanced, enabling students and teachers to communicate and collaborate from different locations worldwide using a range of online tools and platforms.

Methods

Out of many types of technology-based learning, distance learning has gained significant attention. With advancements in web technologies, both ICT and education researchers are striving to optimize technological resources for pedagogical purposes. In foreign language teaching, efforts have been made to provide a range of languages, but there is ongoing exploration for new solutions that cater to the unique needs of language learners.

One of the most common ways to learn a language through distance learning is by using language learning software or apps. These programs offer interactive lessons that cover all aspects of language learning, including grammar, vocabulary, listening,



speaking, and writing. Some examples of popular language learning software include Duolingo, Rosetta Stone, and Babbel.

Another way to learn a foreign language through distance learning is by taking online courses or classes. Many universities and language schools offer online courses that are designed to provide students with a structured curriculum, live instructor-led sessions, and access to course materials such as textbooks and multimedia resources. For teachers, distance teaching offers a way to reach a wider audience without having to be physically present in the same location as their students. Teachers can use various online tools such as video conferencing software or messaging apps to conduct live sessions with their students or provide feedback on assignments.

The main challenge of implementing a hybrid course is effectively delivering teaching materials and instructions to students who are not physically present. To address this issue, all classes are meticulously planned in advance and recorded as Power Point presentations with accompanying narration. This is particularly important for foreign language teaching, as it allows students to see and hear the text and pronunciation simultaneously.

The narration also provides additional explanation and invites direct communication with the student, serving as both instruction and listening comprehension practice. Detailed direction for completing tasks from coursebooks is given, allowing students to work at their own pace by pausing the narration when necessary. This differs from traditional classroom learning where students must follow a predetermined pace.

However, there are other forms of oral communication available besides the traditional classroom setting. For instance, there are monthly audio conference classes that cover a specific topic and include planned activities. Both traditional and e-learning students have the opportunity to participate, but it is not mandatory.

Nevertheless, there are some issues with these real-time classes. E-learning students may find it challenging to schedule their time to attend, and there may be problems with slow or faulty broadband connections causing interruptions and delays. Additionally, discussion groups larger than five participants (including the teacher) may not function well, so students must be split into smaller groups with the teacher rotating between them briefly.

Research and Discussion

Blogs have the potential to be useful in distance language courses due to their user-friendly interface and features such as commenting and revisiting content. However, the teacher's involvement is crucial in ensuring that these tools are integrated into the course effectively. Comas-Quinn (2011) found that while only a small percentage of



distance learners used blogs, those who did found them to be valuable for writing practice and a central aspect of their course.

This aligns with White's (2003) idea that distance learners can create their own version of the course based on their learning needs. However, some teachers were resistant to using tools that were not officially part of the course, resulting in tensions in distance language teaching. These teachers preferred a more centralized approach with fewer spaces to moderate, suggesting the need for an e-moderator separate from the tutor to facilitate online learning opportunities.

The changes in distance language education are similar to the shift in focus in research literature from creating and sharing learning materials, as seen in broadcast education, to emphasizing communication and learning as a social process aided by ICT. These alterations in outlook and methods can be better comprehended by using Garrison's (2000) differentiation between conventional and modern paradigms in distance education.

The use of technology in teaching language from a distance allows teachers and researchers to better understand how students interpret and carry out tasks. This is a significant change from traditional distance teaching where the teacher was isolated from the learning environment and had to guess at how students were understanding the tasks based on their submitted work.

The concept of task-as-workplan versus task-as-process is important in understanding online task design for a multimodal environment. The analysis is based on interactionist SLA, sociocultural theory, theories of affordances, medium and mode, and an understanding of the unique aspects of distance language teaching.

Hampel also emphasizes the importance of providing opportunities for learners to use the target language in authentic communication situations, and how technology can facilitate this process. In her study, she found that students were able to engage in meaningful discussions and collaborative tasks using Lyceum, which helped to develop their language proficiency and confidence.

Overall, Hampel's study highlights the potential benefits of using synchronous online communication tools in distance language learning, and how these tools can be designed to support effective language teaching and learning. By considering both practicality and student interest when selecting and designing technology tools, educators can create engaging and effective learning environments that enhance students' motivation and language skills.

The traditional paradigm for distance language teaching is frequently described in literature that highlights the importance of self-directed learning facilitated by instructional materials with access to support, feedback, and sometimes group

learning opportunities. Experience with these traditional paradigms for distance language education has resulted in research into improving advancement and persistence while minimizing learner isolation.

Conclusion

Overall, distance learning has made it easier for people around the world to learn and teach foreign languages. It provides convenience and flexibility while still maintaining high-quality education standards.

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