

NEW CHALLENGES TO DISTANCE LEARNING IN UKRAINE: FOREIGN LANGUAGE TRAINING

Olha Shum

Senior Lecturer,

National Technical University of Ukraine 'Igor Sikorsky Kyiv Polytechnic Institute'

In recent years global processes have simultaneously affected the educational sphere, which does not foresee the possibility of long-term reorganization of the educational process, but requires both (teacher & student) to react quickly to changes and adapt to new conditions.

The challenges of 2020-21 demonstrated that the Ukrainian system of higher professional education is capable of finding effective solutions to ensure high quality of knowledge. However, the events of 2022 create a number of unforeseen circumstances that will need to be effectively dealt with.

The purpose of our research is to consider ways of effective organization of foreign language training during asynchronous learning, taking into account the need of ensuring all competencies.

We completely agree, that today '*teacher*' is a multi-tasking person who must provide students in various life situations with the highest quality knowledge. For synchronous distance education we can already find approved and tested algorithms of actions and recommended electronic resources, then asynchronous learning methods still need corrections.

One of the possible learning options for students who are temporarily unable to participate in remote trainings could be different tasks according to an individual program (presentations, essays, practical exercises, etc.). On the whole, a teacher is often limited in the time he or she can devote to checking a significant number of written assignments and monitoring work on *Moodle* or *Google Classroom*. The problem of finding alternative solutions arises, since students who study foreign languages need significant practical application of their abilities and skills.

In our opinion, the really important thing is that short distance courses may remain relevant, for example: on the *Coursera* platform – "*International Humanitarian Law in Theory and Practice*", "*International Law in Action: Investigating and Prosecuting International Crimes*" or "*Paradoxes of War*"; as well as on the *Prometheus* platform – "*English for career growth*", "*English for media literacy*" or "*English for journalists*", etc. Most of such courses involve students completing practical tasks at a convenient time. Of course, this type of work cannot be the only or the main way in providing foreign language training. But we think, it could be an effective component of foreign language practical training.

And besides there is an urgent need for alternative practical training. We offer students a creative task where they can verbally express their opinion, as well as work on public speaking skills. As a basis, we chose two types of tasks – paired and individual. Students receive a topic for discussion, and based on the results, they express their opinion on the given issue (all criteria are specified by the teacher). A student can make an audio or video recording of his or her speech and send it to the teacher at a convenient time and in a convenient way (for example, upload it to his or her own folder on *Google Drive* and provide a link, send it to a group chat in the messenger or personally).

During the semester our students receive a creative task – to present a chosen topic in pairs, demonstrating the key aspects of a successful presentation. In case of a temporary lack of technical ability to discuss during the class, it is also possible to make a video recording of the performances of each of the representatives of the pair separately or together, for example, in *Zoom* application. Also, such a task can take the form of a slide presentation, which is accompanied by joint or separate audio recordings.

Performing such training exercises, in our opinion, contributes to the development of students' communication skills and also helps to get rid of the fear of public speaking, especially when performing video versions can always be analyzed (gestures, facial expressions, etc.). This type of work is more effective compared to written exercises, because such works can be easily and quickly checked even from a mobile device and students can be given oral or written comments.

To sum it up, we should admit that despite the new challenges, the system of higher education in Ukraine is trying to respond quickly and efficiently and to ensure the high quality of the educational process. The practical aspect of communication is very important for students, so working on platforms or on individual written tasks is often not enough. We believe that creative individual or group tasks, which can be completed in the form of an audio or video file, and receive feedback from the teacher, can be an effective component of exercises for training communication skills, although they require further improvement.

References

Shum, O. (2022). Interaktyvni elementy dystantsiinoho onlain zaniattia z inozemnykh mov. *Science and innovations in the 21st century: materialy II Vseukr. Internet-konf. stud. ta molod. vchen*, 225-228. [Shum, O. (2022). Interactive elements of distance online classes in foreign languages. *Science and innovations in the 21st century: materials of II Allukr. Internet Conf. study and young scientist*, 225-228.]