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THE IMPORTANCE OF ROLE PLAYING ACTIVITIES FOR GROWING DISTANCE LEARNING PHENOMENON

Abstract: This paper explores the evolution of distance education beginning with correspondence and the use of parcel post, to radio, then to television, and finally to online education. Distance education is defined as a method of teaching where the student and teacher are physically separated. It can utilize a combination of technologies, including correspondence, audio, video, computer, and the Internet. Today's version of distance education is online education, which uses computers and the Internet as the delivery mechanism with at least 80% of the course content delivered online.

Key words: distance learning, the teaching of a foreign language, education system, The use of roleplaying in learning, examination, education institutions, information technology.

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Introduction

The belief is prevalent that the teaching of a foreign language is a comparatively simple subject. This follows the assumption that the process is solely that of providing language experience; for every lesson in which the language is spoken, read or written must inevitably contribute to the extension of the pupils' acquaintance with the language. If this were the true character of the process the only qualification for the role of instructor would be an adequate knowledge of the language.

Closer examination, however, proves that the efficient teaching of a foreign language, far from being a simple process, is probably the most difficult and complex of all subjects in the curriculum [1].

For all subjects the initial considerations are what to teach and who. In this case of all other subjects there is no appreciable difficulty about the first, as the syllabus is usually clear and indisputable. Even for method there are guiding principles which meet with more or less general acceptance. Foreign-language teaching, however, has not yet attained the stage of universal agreement even as to what is to be taught, still less as to how.

This may be taken as an indication of the complex character of the subject, wherein content and method are curiously involved. What appears to be a single subject is really a group of associated yet distinct branches of study; for language is a generic term covering all or any of the following features: speech, reading, composition, grammar, literature, commercial, technical and scientific activities [2].

Learning is often considered to be a normal part of working and personal life. Both learning for achieving a job as well as for achieving knowledge should not be neglected. Online environment is changing continuously and it represents a great opportunity for learning. It is very important to discover how to learn using all available communication channels and choosing the ones that best suit a person's style of filtering the information. There is a noticeable change in the education system of our country every day. It is also pleasant that the use of distance learning is widely used, along with a variety of forms of learning. Distance learning is a new approach to the education system in the country, and nowadays it pays great attention to this process and its foundations are being created.

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Computer classes have been established in all higher education institutions, most of which are based on Internet access. In the rapidly developing state of the information technology, distance learning is of great importance, because this type of education is characterized by a number of positive aspects of existing education. It is possible to involve a wide range of population in this type of education. Distance learning incorporates positive aspects of fulltime education.

Analysis of Subject Matters

According to these aspects, the distance learning is one of the most promising educational types. It is not necessary to concentrate some part of the population who want to study for education on the distance learning. There is no need to spend excessive costs by the listener or the reader. Distance learning explains two basic approaches in teaching - these are models of expansion and transformation. The enlargement model is almost identical to the current teaching methodology. The transformation model incorporates ICT tools for teachers and listeners. These modern methods and technologies of distance learning have brought new concepts and terminology into the theory of theoretical and practical education such as virtual classroom, educational telecommunication projects, coordinator, inverse communication, moderator, communication technology, computer communication, and teleconference [3].

This technology is based almost exclusively on digital communications, including multimedia programs and hyperthermia, which allows the reader to track how to control the information content. Many of the aspects of distance learning are reflected in curriculum planning and course development. Distance education focuses on meeting the demands of the audience and prioritizing the diversity of technologies.

At the present time, when the relationships with other countries are becoming tighter, language proficiency is making a great figure. Modern man must know at least one foreign language well, because mutual understanding between nations is of great importance for peaceful cooperation. Without knowing foreign languages this cooperation is almost impossible. At the present time it is developing different kinds of international relationships: international meetings, exhibitions, sports events, joint businesses. These are good conditions for learning foreign languages. In any cases knowing foreign languages enriches our life. They raise the possibilities of reading foreign literature, communications with the representatives of other countries, acquaintanceship with their culture, economics, science and techniques.

The participation in informational-communication activities promotes the forming of all

integrated aspects of communication competence: linguistic, socio-cultural, cognitive, lingua-cultural; and also contiguous communicative and cognitive learners' proficiency (searching and selecting of relevant information, its analysis, synthesis and classification). Modeling the real authentic environment with the Internet – recourse serves not only to successful language acquisition, but it also allows comprehending the deep unity law and cultural diversity.

Language training of future professionals should focus on the development of communicative competence as well as on the development of professionally oriented language competence. In this regard, one of the main goals of learning a foreign language in higher institutions is to teach practical knowledge of communicative use of a foreign language, both in everyday and in business communication

Today, distance learning is perfectly formed in the United States, and its emergence dates back to the late 1970s. At the beginning, educational institutions functioned individually in distance education. With the advent of satellite TV programs in the 1980s, several educational institutions collaborated on these training courses. The rapid development of global computer networks has had a major impact on all areas of human activity, including education. This is why distance learning is based on the use of modern information and communication technologies, including the Internet.

Distance learning contains the characteristics of fulltime education. Therefore, some elements of the type of correspondence education can be used to organize it. In the 80s of the last century, correspondence courses were organized to prepare applicants for entrance exams. Various tasks and assignments developed by the course staff on the subjects related to the applicants were sent by post. The tasks and tasks assigned to the applicant for a certain period of time for the assignments and tasks assigned to the course of the examinations should be checked by the teacher and brief comments should be reported to the entrant.

One of the most important issues in organizing distance learning is the selection of professors. To fulfill this type of education, teachers should be selected from among the most experienced and organizational professors - teachers. Because distance learning is different from other types of education and their effectiveness is largely dependent on the teacher's skill, organizational and organizational characteristics. Because a teacher involved in the distance learning must be a good pedagogue, wise counselor, and experienced manager at the same time. In the early stages of the distance learning, it is necessary to create distance learning points in the relevant regional or regional centers, based on the demographic characteristics of the population in the

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country. This structure should be designated responsible for organizing the distance learning. In subsequent stages, distance learning centers can be established in several higher education institutions specializing in one or more specializations [4].

Research Methodology

There are some advantages of distance learning:

There is some contradictory evidence about this. Some investigators say that traditional courses are better for interaction and some say the other way around. But studies have proven that it improves interaction with certain persons. Distance learning offers shy or more reticent students the opportunity to participate in chats more than they do in a traditional class. We can just stay in our house and make our homework for that day. Learning in our own surroundings, may make it easier for learners to do their work. They are no longer being distracted from their work by other learners. Some learners experience a lot of performance pressure. This will lessen once they are not surrounded by other learners.

The participant can learn or pursue his/her college while he/she is working. It offers complete flexibility of choosing time. The distance learning is not going to conflict with timing of a day job. The participants can work all day and study at night or vice-versa. Online courses save a great amount of money; fewer teachers, less books and no money to spend on a room to educate [5].

Participants can work at their own place. If the participant is faster than the other participants, he/she doesn't have to wait for them. The other way around, if the participant is slower, he/she can take his/her time. Courses can also be tailored at the level of learning.

Participants were all asked whether they considered themselves to be technologically savvy. Nine reported having what they considered average skills, and one reported being a complete novice: "I'm actually horrible with technology, which is one of the really, I think, funny parts of me teaching online." One participant repeatedly positioned himself as strongly technology-oriented:

"My family's nickname is they have an in-house IT, and actually I'm a little bit of an in-house IT here. When people have like basic problems, they'll say 'hey, can you look at this?' and I'll say 'ok, real quick, do this rather than having to bring bug busters in [9]".

One participant pointed out that the rapid growth of online learning caught some institutions off guard, and that in many instances, teachers are thrown online with little preparation. Then, when failure occurs, the modality is blamed: *"I will share a concern. As online learning continues to grow and grow at this really torrid pace, as a faculty member and administrative member and someone who cares deeply about the quality of online learning, I worry that the growth is kind of our own worst enemy. Some institutions are*

jumping on the online bandwagon and encouraging faculty to teach online and enabling that to happen with technology. So for example you get a learning management system and you get a course shell and they're told 'go, teach online.

Great. Do as much as you can'. But they're not given instruction on how to do it well. They're not provided the infrastructure on how to be effective online and we could end up with online classes that are also poor quality. And that's where quality will be blamed on the modality, not on the way that they built their course or instructional practices. 169 And it's really not a modality issue, it's a support issue. So I fear that we're going to kind of outrun our supply lines if you will, of quality support and we may end up having some sort of a backlash on online learning where people are going to say, 'wait a minute, this isn't so great' because we expanded too fast [9]".

However, with advantages there are some serious shortcomings of distance learning:

Following an education in a traditional class is something that happens in a social context. Interacting with other people is not something which stands central with an online course. In fact, you can't even talk to friends and other colleagues that you do in a normal college course. Some participants seriously miss the human aspect because of engaging with the technology and machines.

Some people absolutely need an educator to learn successfully. An educator can immediately help with the problems and can get to the core of the problem. In distance learning, if they have any doubt then they have to clear themselves without taking help from their teacher or friends.

Learning from a computer is not the most user-friendly method to use. It causes poor vision, strain injuries and back problems. Furthermore, you cannot test everything with online courses. Some things can be much better learned by practice.

If the participants have a lack of self-discipline, it is very unlikely that they will be motivated to complete their online course. There is no teacher available to say that the participants have to get started with their online course. Moreover, without competition they tend to learn less.

And the following Role Playing activities can be used in teaching foreign languages. They are:

Telephone Conversation - *Speaking on the phone is different to a face-to-face conversation because one relies solely on language to communicate. Get the students who are practicing to sit back to back in order for this to work properly. There is a whole range of ideas which one can use to act this out.*

Examples include:

phoning to make a complaint, speaking to a friend, inquiring about job

Going to the Shop - *a great one for younger learners as it will teach them the basics of interacting*

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with people. Children generally rely on their parents to buy things for them, therefore this will boost their overall general confidence in buying. It can be as simple or as complex as one wishes, depending on the situation.

Job Interview - work is usually a good topic to begin with when [teaching adults](#). Many are learning English in order to improve their career prospects. As a result, a job interview role play is an excellent way to get the class learning that all important material.

Analysis and results

Studies have shown that role-play can be used effectively to improve students not only language skills, but also interpersonal and communicative skills. So, implementation of role playing activities in language teaching is pivotal, as:

- It enables students to learn and practice the target language in meaningful context
- It improves students' different skills needed for the language acquisition process
- It motivates students to be interested and involved in learning
- It creates low-anxiety learning environments for students
- It offers students a variety of experiences and improves their 4 language skills
- It helps to improve students' cultural and nonverbal behavior.

So, role playing activities are usually more successful if they involve problem solving or if there

is a task to be carried out, rather than simply acting out a situation until it runs out of momentum. The effective use of different types of role-playing activities can enable the teacher to provide students with the opportunity to practice the target language in a variety of meaningful contexts. By practising the target language in different roles, students consolidate and review their knowledge of word order, phrasing, and punctuation that contributes to the meaning of a written sentence.

The use of roleplaying in learning and practising a conversation not only consolidates the students' knowledge of certain vocabulary and grammar used in similar situations but also brings home to the students some aspects of behaviors, such as the skills of starting a conversation and the development of good human relations [6].

Therefore, role-play clearly promotes effective interpersonal relations and social transactions among participants.

In conclusion, nowadays, distance learning turns out to be more and more practiced. Many traditional universities started to share their courses online for free. It represents an easy and comfortable method to achieve knowledge in almost every field, from law and accounting, to human sciences, such as psychology and sociology or history.

Distance learning is a great alternative to traditional universities, especially for people who can't afford the time and money to take real courses. Distance learning is a growing phenomenon around the world and people are interested to know more about it.

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