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“ENGLISH FOR SPECIAL PURPOSES” FOR NON-LINGUISTIC SPECIALTIES: EXPERIENCE OF DISTANCE LEARNING

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“English for special purposes” for non-linguistic specialties: experience of distance learning. *The article is devoted to one of the most pressing problems of Ukrainian education in current conditions - the transition to distance learning at all levels of the educational process. The authors analyze the effectiveness of distance learning to improve the quality of teaching the discipline “English for Special Purposes” for non-linguistic specialties online. The study identifies some common advantages and disadvantages of distance learning, highlighted by Ukrainian and foreign researchers. Data and conclusions of experiments on the effectiveness of educational institutions in connection with the mass transition to distance learning in 2020 are presented. A separate period of learning foreign languages in a distance format is studied. In order to analyze the effectiveness of distance learning, questionnaires are developed, the questions of which allowed giving an overall assessment of the distance learning pro-*

cess, its technical capabilities, and the peculiarities of learning a foreign language online. A general analysis of the success of the discipline "English for Special Purposes" in the period of full-time and distance learning is performed, being reflected in the charts and graphs. This study allowed us to analyze some features of distance learning a foreign language, evaluate its effectiveness in general, and identify significant advantages and disadvantages from the student's point of view. The questionnaire results served as a basis for the development of recommendations to the teaching staff to study the difficulties that arise when learning a foreign language in a remote format. The authors concluded that it is necessary to further improve the educational process by using innovative learning technologies and expanding educational opportunities for distance learning.

Keywords: distance learning, English for Special Purposes (ESP), information and communication technologies, educational technologies, forms of distance learning.

УСКОВА Л.В., ІГНАТЬЄВА О.С., КОВАЛЬ С.М., ЛАНСЬКИХ О.Б.
«Англійська мова для спеціального призначення» для нелінгвістичних спеціальностей: досвід дистанційного навчання. Стаття присвячена одній із найбільш актуальних проблем українського освіти в сучасних умовах, а саме тимчасовому переходу на дистанційне навчання на всіх рівнях освітнього процесу в умовах пандемії. Авторами проведено аналіз ефективності дистанційного навчання з метою підвищення якості викладання дисципліни «Англійська мова за професійним спрямуванням» для нелінгвістичних спеціальностей в онлайн-режимі. У дослідженні виокремлено загальні переваги та недоліки дистанційного навчання. Наведено дані та висновки експериментів щодо ефективності роботи освітніх навчальних закладів у зв'язку з масовим переходом на дистанційне навчання у 2020 році. Авторами проаналізовано окремих період навчання іноземним мовам у дистанційному форматі. Для аналізу ефективності дистанційного навчання розроблено анкети, опитувальники, що уможливило оцінити якість дистанційного навчання в цілому, з його технічними можливостями та специфікою вивчення іноземної мови онлайн. Проведено загальний аналіз успішності з дисципліни «Англійська мова за професійним спрямуванням» в період очного та дистанційного навчання, результати якого відображені на діаграмі та графіках. Дослідження уможливило

аналіз особливостей дистанційного навчання іноземній мові, оцінити його ефективність вцілому, а також виявити істотні переваги та недоліки з точки зору студента. Результати анкетування слугували основою для розробки рекомендацій викладацькому складу щодо вивчення труднощів, які виникають при вивченні іноземної мови в дистанційному форматі. Автори прийшли до висновку про необхідність подальшого вдосконалення навчального процесу шляхом застосування інноваційних технологій навчання та розширення освітніх можливостей дистанційного навчання.

Ключові слова: дистанційне навчання, Англійська мова за професійним спрямуванням, інформаційно-комунікаційні технології, педагогічні технології, форми дистанційного навчання.

УСКОВА Л.В., ИГНАТЬЕВА О.С., КОВАЛЬ С.М., ЛАНСКИХ О.Б. **«Английский для специальных целей» для неязыковых специальностей: опыт дистанционного обучения.** Стаття посвящена одной из наиболее актуальных проблем украинского образования в современных условиях, а именно, временному переходу на дистанционное обучение на всех уровнях образовательного процесса в условиях пандемии. Авторами проведен анализ эффективности дистанционного обучения с целью повышения качества преподавания дисциплины «Английский язык для профессионального общения» для нелингвистических специальностей в онлайн-режиме. В исследовании выделены общие преимущества и недостатки дистанционного обучения. Приведены данные и выводы экспериментов по эффективности работы учебных заведений в связи с массовым переходом на дистанционное обучение в 2020 году. Авторами проанализирован отдельный период обучения иностранным языкам в дистанционном формате. Для анализа эффективности дистанционного обучения разработаны анкеты, опросники, что позволило оценить качество дистанционного обучения в целом, с его техническими возможностями и спецификой изучения иностранного языка онлайн. Проведен общий анализ успеваемости по дисциплине «Английский язык для профессионального общения» в период очного и дистанционного обучения, результаты которого отражены на диаграмме и графиках. Исследование позволило анализировать особенности дистанционного обучения

иностранным языку, оценить его эффективность в целом, а также выявить существенные преимущества и недостатки с точки зрения студента. Результаты анкетирования послужили основой для разработки рекомендаций преподавательскому составу по изучению трудностей, возникающих при изучении иностранного языка в дистанционном формате. Авторы пришли к выводу о необходимости дальнейшего усовершенствования учебного процесса путем применения инновационных технологий обучения и расширения образовательных возможностей дистанционного обучения.

Ключевые слова: дистанционное обучение, Английский язык для профессионального общения, информационно-коммуникационные технологии, педагогические технологии, формы дистанционного обучения.

Introduction. The problem of distance learning has received much attention in the scientific literature recently. The distance learning system is in the center of the attention of scientific circles, and current trends indicate further activation of research in this area. In particular, such scientists as V. Kukhareenko, S. Vitvytska, V. Yasulaitis, E. Polat, A. Petrov, O. Tyshchenko, and many others dealt with theoretical, methodological, and methodological problems of distance learning.

In the 21st century, the concept of traditional education has changed radically. Society has entered a new era, the era of the online education revolution. Thanks to the Internet and new technologies, it is possible to get a quality education at any time and in any place. As the Internet blurs the line between «far» and «near,» distance learning is beginning to destroy the existing model of education. Qualified teachers continue to be an integral part of every student's life, but technology can reduce the physical distance between participants of the educational process.

Nowadays, distance learning has become increasingly popular for a variety of reasons. The ability to combine work and study, the absence of the need to spend extra money on travel or business trips, makes this form of training cost-effective and more attractive to employers. Many higher education institutions are active in implementing various distance learning programs, primarily training courses and additional education. At the same time, modern info-communication technologies provide the necessary technical support for the educational process. In recent years, with the spread of Covid-19 and the global pandemic, distance learning has become not just

innovative and promising but the only possible form of learning. 2020 can be called a turning point in the history of distance learning, which has spread almost everywhere, regardless of the level of education and the specifics of the contingent of students.

The article aims to highlight the problems of implementing distance learning elements in higher education institutions.

The significant period of 2020, when distance education was used in almost all educational organizations, is a significant experience that needs to be analyzed. There are many supporters of distance learning, no fewer opponents. Disputes on this issue are still ongoing, clearly confirming the particular relevance of the chosen topic in current conditions.

The comprehensive and detailed analysis of all components of the educational process and its results will identify difficulties and problems to identify ways to solve them in the future. The novelty of this article is the attempt of the authors to comprehend the distance learning period to determine its effectiveness through the eyes of students, which will further improve the quality of teaching the discipline «English for Special Purposes» through the prism of distance learning.

The authors conducted a theoretical analysis of scientific and pedagogical sources of the topic, summarized domestic and foreign experience. During the study, interviews with teachers and students, questionnaires, and analysis of student achievement dynamics in the discipline «ESP» were conducted.

The results of the study. Although distance education in European countries dates back to the XIX century [6], the mass transition due to the problematic epidemiological situation in 2020 has caused many difficulties in our country and abroad [8,17,13]. Although ICT-based pedagogical technologies are widely used in the educational process, during the mass transition to distance learning, both the teaching staff and the students realized their lack of competence in the technical field. In addition, it is difficult to adapt from the classroom system to a new learning format in organizing and conducting classes for all participants in the educational process.

Distance education has several undoubted advantages:

1. Flexible training schedule: if its time and duration, venue determine the full-time training for each lesson, then, in this case, everyone can choose the most appropriate pace of work and place of study. In case of any material causes difficulties, it is possible to carefully understand the topic before moving on to a new one. The flexibility of the learning process allows you to study without leaving work, family, does not require trips [4].

2. There is no fear of mistakes. Often students do not want to participate in any kind of work for fear of making a mistake, causing laughter or reproach

from other participants in the educational process. Although it is impossible to learn a foreign language «silently,» having mastered some level on their own (the most commonly used vocabulary, speech clichés, basic grammatical constructions), students find it easier to move on to group work.

3. The opportunity to use any volume of authentic sources: text materials, movies, video lectures, podcasts, and so on. Due to limited time and technical capabilities, the teacher cannot always use the available material on a particular topic in the classroom. There is no time frame for distance learning, and no additional technical equipment is required.

4. The decrease in financial costs. Distance learning does not imply the purchase of equipment, payment for the rental of premises, and related costs; the course composition in quantity can be any; a large teaching staff is not required, a few tutors are enough. The financial burden is also reduced for students: no need to buy literature, change their place of residence; as a result, the cost of distance learning is usually lower [5].

With all diversity of advantages the distance work has a number of disadvantages:

1. The lack of feedback from the teacher, which leads to a lack of correction, timely clarification of the most difficult issues to understand.
2. The absence of the constant supervision done by a teacher.
3. Distance learning supposes individual work mostly, in connection with it there is no personal communication.
4. The high degree of self-organization and skills of time-management are demanded from learners.
5. When conducting control, there is a problem of student authentication.
6. In some cases, distance learning can be longer than full-time [14].

After a certain period of distance learning in 2020, it is already possible to draw the first conclusions about its effectiveness. For this purpose, various surveys were conducted among teaching staff [4, 7, 14, 15, 18, 19] and students [6, 18]; there are already studies on the impact of distance learning on educational results [9]. The findings indicate that the teaching staff plans to continue using online courses. Students' opinions about distance learning differ because of age, educational level and training courses are the determining factors. Scientists at the University of California, Berkeley proved the effectiveness of distance education after conducting an experiment that included checking the assimilation of the material by conducting an exam, grading tests in the learning process and analyzing the subjective impressions of students from the course [7].

At Cherkasy State Technological University, an electronic educational environment is created and functioned quite effectively on the Moodle LMS

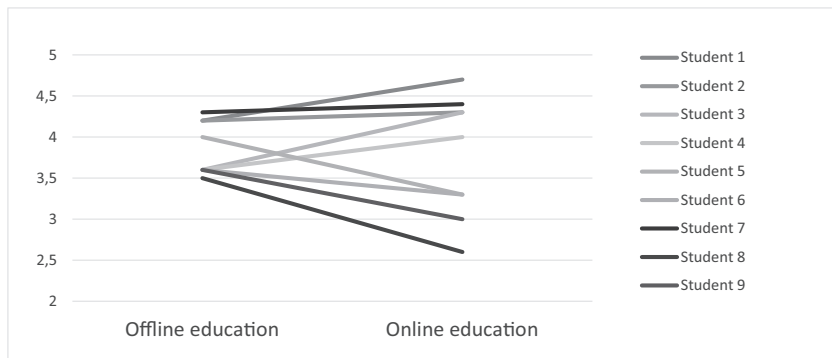
platform, which allows not only exchanging information, but also conducting distance classes in various forms, monitoring the educational activities of students.

Nevertheless, the forced transition of almost all educational organizations to distance learning revealed a number of problems of a different nature. Even with the necessary technical equipment of an educational organization, it is necessary to take into account that not all disciplines can be equally easily transferred to a distance format. Thus, education in higher educational institutions of Ukraine provides for a whole block of practice-oriented disciplines that are difficult, and sometimes simply impossible, to master independently or remotely. Teaching a foreign language, although being possible in a distance format, has a certain specificity and causes additional difficulties for students. In addition, it turned out that not all teachers and students, both technically and psychologically, are ready for this form of education.

The study analyzed the progress of students of the Cherkasy State Technological University for 2 semesters of the 2020–2021 academic year, a comparative analysis of assessments in the discipline of «ESP» for the period of full-time and distance learning was carried out. In order to find out the opinions of the students themselves, as well as to analyze the difficulties arisen in the course of distance learning of a foreign language, the authors developed a questionnaire. Second-year students of the Faculty of Economics and Management of the Cherkasy State Technological University took part in the survey (80 respondents). The results of the survey served as the basis for the development of recommendations for the teaching staff to eliminate the difficulties arising in the study of a foreign language in a distance format.

An analysis of student performance for the first semester of the current academic year showed that distance learning did not affect the effectiveness of the educational process. This fact is confirmed by data on the dynamics of the performance of second-year students of the Faculty of Economics and Management for the period of full-time (September-October) and distance (November-December) education. Since the time intervals spent in face-to-face and distance formats are generally comparable, the results can be considered relevant.

The analysis of progress in the discipline of «ESP» was carried out in six study groups of the second year students of the Faculty of Economics and Management. The average score of each student was compared for the period of full-time and distance learning. As a result, an individual trajectory of learning a foreign language was built for each student in the group (see Pic. 1).



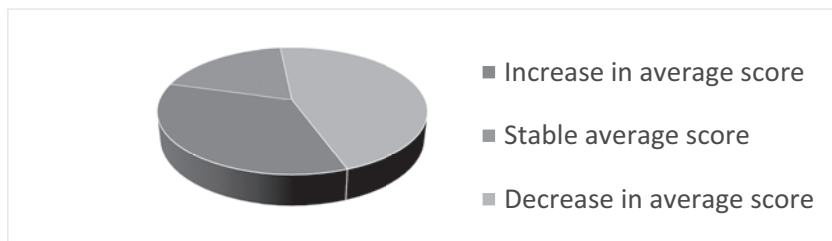
Pic 1. Individual student trajectory of academic performance within one group

language was built for each student in the group (see Pic. 1).

It should be noted that in each group, several students were identified who, during the period of distance learning, managed to increase their average score. It is obviously associated with the individual personality traits of students. Since the role of the teacher has changed in the context of distance learning, direct control on his part is weakened, a large share of the responsibility falls on the students themselves. In this regard, personality traits such as the ability to self-control and self-organization, the ability to rationally plan their time, internal motivation, etc., are of decisive importance.

The number of students who showed a decline in academic performance during the distance learning period is not the same in different groups (see Fig. 2 and 3, for example).

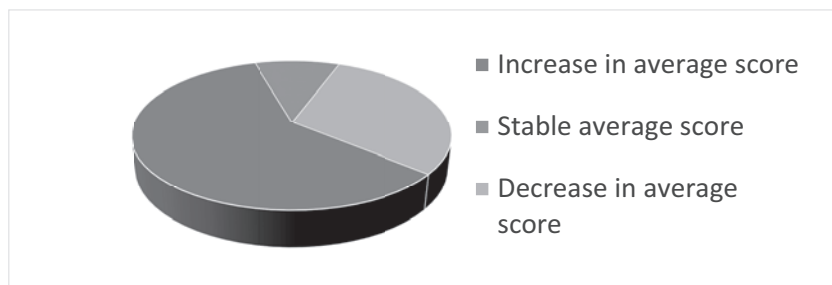
Analysis of the academic performance in group 1



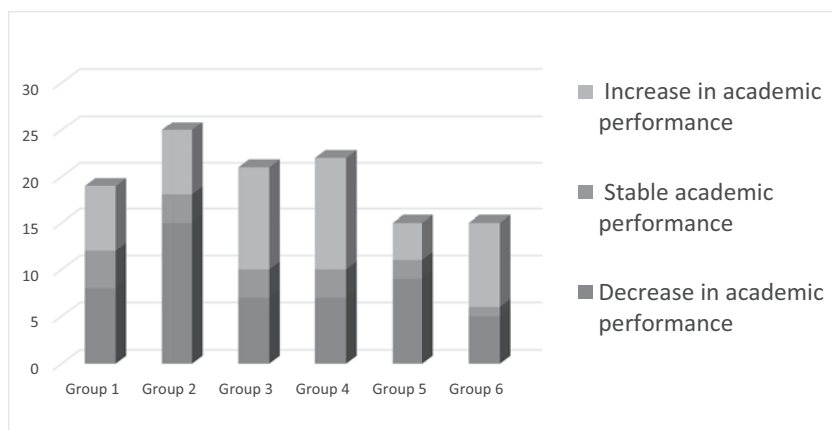
Pic 2. Fluctuation in student performance in group 1 (online vs offline)

Analysis of academic performance in group 4

Against the background of the overall generally stable academic performance, it should be noted that in different study groups, some students



Pic 3. Fluctuation in student performance in group 4 (online vs offline)



Pic 4. Dynamic analysis of academic performance in groups

showed a greater or lesser decrease in the average score in the discipline «ESP» for the period of distance learning compared to face-to-face studies (see Pic. 4). Obviously, this fact can be considered not only in the general context of the variability of indicators of educational activity but also in connection with the individual characteristics of students' adaptation to the distance learning system.

To identify the problems that have arisen and the most significant difficulties in the process of distance learning of a foreign language, the authors have developed a questionnaire. It includes several blocks of issues related to the general assessment of the distance learning process, its technical equipment, including those associated with teaching a foreign language, and the specifics of studying this discipline.

In general, students quite easily adapted to the conditions of distance learning (67% - excellent, 33% - good). The majority of students (87%) noted that they like to study remotely, only 8% expressed their dissatisfaction. At the same time, it turned out that students' level of motivation does not directly depend on the form of education. The majority of the respondents (51%) noted their motivation, in general, did not change, and for some (44%), it even increased. Half of the students who took part in the survey did not feel any changes in the study load due to the transition to distance learning. Many (89%) praised the work of the teaching staff.

Among the advantages of distance learning there are the following:

- the importance of the individual pace of work, which is associated with the flexibility of the educational process;
- increasing motivation through learning in a comfortable environment and the ability to combine study with other activities;
- the possibility of multiple repetitions of material causing difficulties;
- an exciting form of material presented through the use of information technology and various sources of authentic information.

Within the framework of distance learning, students were able to build an individual educational trajectory based on their own needs, unique personality characteristics, and the level of language training.

The students attributed to the disadvantages of distance learning: - a large amount of educational material due to an increase in the proportion of independent work;

- the complexity of the implementation of practical tasks without the simultaneous explanation of the teacher;
- technical interruptions in the operation of the distance learning system.

The survey showed that during the distance learning period, foreign language teachers used various forms of work: assignments for self-fulfillment, online testing, conducting classes in conference calls, and chatting. From the point of view of the students themselves, synchronous forms of work, web classes, chats turned out to be the most effective because, in such cases, there is two-way communication, as in the face-to-face training system. In this case, the material is not submitted for independent study, and the teacher is directly involved in the educational process. Online testing, the purpose of which is self-control on the part of students, became quite a popular type of work.

It should be noted that during the survey, the possibilities of modern technologies were highly appreciated, which made it possible to diversify the educational process by attracting additional materials, for various reasons, not so often used in the process of full-time education - online games, Web Quests, videos followed by interactive tasks and etc.

Conclusion

The study made it possible to analyze some of the features of distance learning a foreign language, evaluate its effectiveness in general, and identify significant advantages and disadvantages from students' points of view. The questionnaire survey showed that the transition from full-time education to distance learning, although associated with some difficulties, did not cause any particular challenges for the students. In addition, they emphasized the high value of the knowledge gained during the period of online learning. The advantages of distance learning positively influenced attitudes towards the educational process, while its disadvantages led to a slight decrease in academic performance for individual students.

According to the questionnaire results, it turned out that the most significant difficulties were caused by the process of performing practical tasks in isolation, in the absence of classmates, and parallel explanations of the teacher. The teacher's lack of live communication and direct control negates the ability to correct answers, correct mistakes in a timely manner, or prevent their occurrence in the future.

Of course, students feel differently in the conditions of full-time and distance learning, and in this case, it is their individual and personal characteristics that play a significant role. It should be noted that compensating for the disadvantages of this form of work is the task of a teacher, who, following the specifics of the discipline, must correctly select pedagogical methods and techniques of work. Particular attention should be paid to creating the necessary conditions for the individualization of the process of teaching foreign languages, taking into account the different levels of language training of students, the degree of their adaptation to distance learning, and readiness for independent work.

When teaching foreign languages, interpersonal communication plays an important role, therefore teachers are advised to:

- 1) to approach rationally the distribution of the teaching load for classroom studies and independent work;
- 2) to provide for a significant proportion of educational material for synchronous work (in chat or conference calls, since no independent work can replace communication without loss of quality);
- 3) to leave for independent work control and measuring materials, exercises to consolidate the topic, passed together with the teacher, additional information on the topic, preparation of various kinds of projects, presentations, written works;
- 4) to make significant the individual work of the teacher with the students, promptly eliminating the difficulties that arise and compensate for the shortcomings of distance education.

In general, distance learning of foreign languages in educational institutions of higher education can be considered quite effective, provided that the educational process is improved by expanding educational opportunities and using innovative pedagogical technologies.

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