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## THE USE OF DISTANCE LEARNING IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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**Abstract:** the rapid development of digital technologies has significantly transformed educational practices, including the teaching and learning of foreign languages. Distance learning has become an important instructional approach that allows learners to access educational materials and communicate with teachers regardless of geographical limitations. This study examines the effectiveness of distance learning in foreign language teaching and its impact on pupils' engagement and language skill development. The research used a mixed-method approach, including surveys, online classroom observations, and analysis of pupils' performance in online activities. The findings show that distance learning can provide flexible learning opportunities, increase learner autonomy, and support the development of language skills through digital tools and interactive platforms.

**Keywords:** distance learning, foreign language teaching, online education, digital tools, learner autonomy

**Introduction.** The integration of technology into education has reshaped traditional teaching methods and created new opportunities for learning. One of the most significant developments in modern education is the emergence of distance learning. Distance learning refers to an instructional approach in which teachers and pupils are separated by physical distance and communicate through digital technologies and online platforms. In foreign language teaching, distance learning offers various advantages, such as access to authentic materials, opportunities for interaction with native speakers, and flexible learning environments. Online platforms allow pupils to participate in virtual classrooms, access multimedia resources, and collaborate with peers.

The importance of distance learning increased significantly during global disruptions to traditional education systems, highlighting the need for effective online teaching strategies. Language teachers have increasingly adopted digital tools, including video conferencing platforms, learning management systems, and interactive language applications. Despite these advantages, distance learning also presents several challenges. Limited student interaction, technical difficulties, and reduced motivation can negatively affect the learning process. Therefore, it is important to examine how distance learning can be effectively implemented in foreign language education.

**Methods.** This study employed a mixed-method research design combining quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. The research focused on

analyzing pupils' experiences with distance learning in foreign language classes. The participants were 45 school pupils studying English as a foreign language. All participants had previous experience with online learning platforms and participated in distance learning classes.

Materials and Tools: several digital tools and platforms were used in the distance learning process, including:

- Learning management systems (LMS)
- Video conferencing platforms
- Online discussion forums
- Interactive language learning applications
- Digital assignments and quizzes

These tools allowed teachers to deliver lessons, provide feedback, and monitor student progress.

**Results.** The results of the study indicate that distance learning can positively influence foreign language learning when appropriate digital tools and teaching strategies are used.

-First, questionnaire results revealed that 78% of pupils appreciated the flexibility of distance learning, particularly the ability to access materials at any time. Pupils also reported that recorded lectures and digital resources helped them review difficult topics.

-Second, online classroom observations showed that pupils actively participated in interactive activities such as group discussions and online quizzes. Digital platforms made it easier for teachers to organize collaborative learning tasks.

-Third, pupils reported improvements in their listening and reading skills due to increased exposure to multimedia materials, including videos, podcasts, and online texts. However, several challenges were identified. Some pupils experienced technical problems related to internet connectivity. Others reported difficulties maintaining concentration during long online sessions. Despite these challenges, most participants agreed that distance learning provided valuable opportunities for language practice and independent learning.

**Discussion.** The findings of this study support previous research highlighting the benefits of technology integration in language education. Distance learning allows pupils to access diverse learning resources and interact with teachers and peers through digital platforms. One important advantage of distance learning is the promotion of learner autonomy. Pupils are encouraged to manage their own learning schedules, review materials independently, and use additional online resources to improve their language skills.

Another benefit is the availability of authentic language input through multimedia resources such as videos, podcasts, and online articles. These materials help pupils develop listening and reading comprehension while also exposing them to different accents and communication styles. However, the effectiveness of distance learning depends largely on the design of online courses and the ability of teachers to create interactive and engaging activities. Without sufficient interaction and feedback,

pupils may feel isolated and less motivated. Teachers should therefore combine synchronous activities, such as live discussions, with asynchronous tasks, including forums and recorded lectures, to create balanced online learning environments.

**Conclusion.** Distance learning has become an essential component of modern education and offers significant opportunities for foreign language teaching. The results of this study demonstrate that online learning environments can support the development of language skills, increase learner autonomy, and provide flexible access to educational resources. Although technical and motivational challenges may occur, these issues can be addressed through effective course design, appropriate technological support, and active teacher guidance. Overall, distance learning can serve as a valuable complement to traditional language instruction and contribute to more accessible and flexible foreign language education.

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