

ONLINE: AN OBSTACLE OR AN OPPORTUNITY

The authors of the following scientific article review the latest trends in distance learning and teaching foreign languages, as well as their relevance in the present day circumstances, due to the emergency reasons, such as the pandemic and war. The article focuses on the optimization of the learning process and on boosting students' motivation with the help of the expanding and appropriate use of online platforms, language learning applications, open educational resources, and artificial intelligence. The article highlights the potential benefits and challenges of online learning. The first provides teachers with numerous opportunities, while the latter lead to stressing the importance of paying attention to emotions in technology-mediated teaching. The possibilities to overcome technical, as well as psychological problems are also described in the article. Besides that, the authors emphasize the fact that the necessity of students' digital competence and autonomy in using the proposed tools is absolutely crucial nowadays. Moreover, the accent is made on the importance of creating autonomous workspaces with didactic materials and communication resources. The authors stress the fact that the concept of a "learning environment" has been changing over the years due to the development of technologies. Finally, the article suggests user-friendly platforms which may serve as means of simplification of the learning process, and clear instructions to overcome the common problems students and teachers usually face in online learning, such as a lack of confidence in technology and self-confidence, or, for instance, the necessity to work in multi-levelled groups. The authors provide examples of using collaborative platforms, authentic texts, and game tools in order to illustrate the ways of adapting the process of language learning to the current situation and the particular students' needs. Special attention is paid to the implementation of artificial intelligence, the popularity of which, has been rocketing recently, as a powerful tool for both students and teachers of foreign languages.

Key words: distance learning, online tools, foreign languages, digital competencies, multi-levelled groups, learning effectiveness, motivation, artificial intelligence.

(статтю подано мовою оригіналу)

In recent years language teachers and learners have experienced an unprecedented number of challenges due to the rise of distance learning, in particular distance learning in case of emergency. It should be mentioned, however, that a great variety of online platforms, as well as open educational resources (OERs), had been created long before the pandemic. Thus, though the participants of the learning process have been facing the necessity of adaptation to the usage of these tools, they possess a certain level of digital competence, which turn online learning from an obstacle to a powerful source of opportunities. As the world is becoming more and more connected, and therefore, being multilingual has become more valuable than ever before. The ability to communicate effectively with people from different parts of the world is becoming a necessity for many, whether it be for business, travel, or personal reasons. As a result, language learning has become a crucial aspect of personal and professional development. The rise of artificial intelligence has brought forth new tools for language learners, including chatbots like GPT (Generative Pre-training Transformer) chat.

Recently, a number of researchers, while focusing on the development of technology for language learning and teaching, also point out the importance of paying attention not only to technological resources but to the emotions of the participants as well. In particular, a special attention is paid to the potential of modifying a language course design in order to benefit learners' emotional states. For instance, J. Tao and X. Gao highlights the idea that online classes, despite being a source of students' boredom, can also serve the purpose of reducing negative emotions [6, 102]. They also mention that students' readiness for online learning should be taken into consideration, as well as the teachers' experience.

In this context, researchers mention diversities in language learners' individual learning environments. P. Benson turns the spotlight on the connections between these diversities (both in and outside the classroom) and the development of learners' autonomy. He pays special attention to the fact that "autonomy and individuality are mutually constitutive". Unlike some other researchers, he defines the language learning environment as "a space and everything of relevance to language learning that it contains, both human and non-human. According to P. Benson, any possible source of language experience, such as people, music, social media (both in text and video format), etc. deserve attention as parts of the learning environment [3, 45].

M.D. Díaz-Noguera et al. in their turn, analyse the way students adapt to digital transformation, mentioning that access to innovative "teaching resources that have enriched university learning and the multidisciplinary and global understanding of knowledge". The authors draw attention to the fact that students' digital competence should be at a rather high level, letting them feel empowered and autonomous in using the proposed tools. to be in a comfort zone. Besides, they name autonomous workspaces for students as one of the crucial elements of today's learning process, being "equipped with autonomous work guidelines, didactic materials with a broad audio-visual culture, and communication resources, all enhanced by the transformation of the evaluation process and the support of good tutorship" [2, 58].

This article **aims** to demonstrate and analyse the latest trends in distance learning, being relevant in the present days due to emergency reasons, focusing on the necessity to optimise the learning process and, consequently, students' motivation with the help of expanding and appropriate usage of online platforms, learning apps, open educational resources, and artificial intelligence.

It goes without saying that online learning provides students as well as teachers with great opportunities, being convenient and easy to access. At the same time, it makes both teachers and students face a number of challenges of various origins.

On the one hand, members of the learning process can benefit from the disappearance of any geographical barriers, round-the-clock access to learning materials, variety and relevance of learning materials, adaptability of learning methods, possibilities of personalising and individualisation of approaches, etc.

As practice shows, all these factors contribute greatly to the effectiveness of language acquisition and students' academic achievements.

On the other hand, both students and teachers may face such problems as a lack of confidence in technology (caused by different reasons, such as poor internet connection, low quality of equipment, constant power outages, incompatible devices, etc), lack of self-confidence (due to either above-mentioned technical issues or lack of digital skills), necessity to work in multi-levelled groups, lack of interaction, plagiarism, etc.

Overcoming these problems significantly depends on a fact, if students are motivated enough to make efforts in this direction. They have to possess enough willpower to continue studying in spite of all the difficulties, they have to be self-disciplined in order to be able to work autonomously, they have to develop not only language but their digital competence as well, and, last but not least, their adaptation capacity has to be rather high. It should be also mentioned that in the majority of cases, students (and teachers) have no alternative, they cannot choose between online and offline learning, no matter what preferences and learning styles they have. For some, this may mean coming out of their comfort zone which may lead to a certain decrease in motivation.

As far as confidence in technology is concerned, it often happens that a lack of it, as well as a lack of self-confidence, leads to losing any interest in learning. It is usually taken for granted that teenagers and young adults are familiar with new technologies, but it often appears that especially during distance learning in case of emergency, they may feel lost because of technological issues.

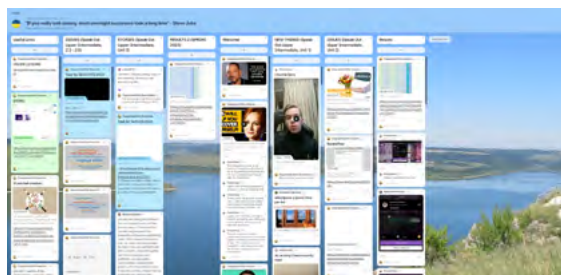
This problem may be solved first of all by choosing user-friendly platforms, simplification of the learning process (i.e. using a limited number of applications and open educational resources allows students to get accustomed to them and thus to feel more confident, to concentrate their efforts on language learning not on trying to adapt to new technology) and, obviously, clear instructions.

Besides, J. Tao et al, when describing the experience of technology-mediated teaching during the pandemic, mention the necessity of paying attention to emotions. An important fact is mentioned that "online teaching has a significant impact on language teachers' emotional experience, identity change, and pedagogical competence", while students, in their turn, may feel bored because of insufficient attention, user-unfriendly technology, and other reasons [6, 104]. We cannot deny the fact that emotional well-being has to be taken into consideration (and this is especially relevant for Ukrainian students and teachers).

During the academic year 2022–2023, a number of students, as well as teachers in Ukraine have been forced to skip or at least reschedule lessons due to power outages and alerts. Students who stay in a different time zone may also have trouble joining the lessons. As a result, a certain amount of information is lost. Organising the learning process with the help of an online platform, such as Padlet or Google Classroom, seems an effective solution to a missed information problem.

One more issue that should be mentioned in the context of the development of educational digital transformation is cheating becoming an almost inevitable part of the learning process. Evidently, this makes the necessity of constant monitoring and interaction even more apparent.

All the factors mentioned above make it an absolute necessity to redesign students' learning experiences according to their relevant needs. In this context using collaborative platforms, e.g. Padlet, Google Classroom, or an internal university platform may be the key.



First of all, collaborative platforms provide students with constant access to all the course materials, by placing the links either to the materials themselves or to a Google Drive containing them. Furthermore, students can post their works (texts, audio and video recordings) in order to get teachers' feedback or peer reviews. Thus, a balance

between synchronous and asynchronous learning can be achieved, as far as those students who could not for some reason attend a lesson have almost the same opportunities to share their ideas as those who could attend. Finally, all the links to interactive quizzes (using Google Forms, quizizz.com, etc) can also be posted on a padlet wall, thus simplifying the process of assessment.

It should be mentioned that the inevitability of combining synchronous and asynchronous learning in case of emergencies demands the development of students' autonomy, which became crucial with the rise of distant learning, being one of the most significant factors in language acquisition, closely connected to motivation.

As it is mentioned by P. Benson, "autonomy grows over the course of lifetimes", which brings us to the conclusion that "learners become more autonomous overall, provided that their experiences of learning are varied and provide opportunities for self-direction" [3, 50].

Using collaborative platforms certainly contributes to this, encouraging students to be more independent in their learning, but at the same time, it demands the development of self-discipline, which a lot of students, especially those with low language competencies, may lack. The reason for that, in its turn, may be either a lack of self-confidence or a lack of interest. In this case, a Padlet wall may become a kind of social network, just for one group of students, creating an atmosphere of involvement, and teamwork, thus arousing curiosity and interest. Sharing ideas, and posting works, that is making them public (unlike sending them directly to a teacher), commenting on peers' posts, and communicating (e.g., writing invitations and responding to them) may give students a sense of practical application on what was acquired in terms of learning.

Using collaborative platforms (Padlet, Google documents, jam board, etc.) for foreign language communication bases students' learning process on a concrete experience, and, consequently, demonstrates to them the objective they need to achieve and how the exercises they do (either according to a textbook or on an online platform) will help them reach that objective. This way of organising their learning experiences encourages students to become active participants in the learning process rather than spectators, thus reinforcing their motivation. Moreover, it contributes to the development of their soft skills, such as teamwork, flexibility, and problem-solving.

There is one more aspect that should not be overlooked, the fact that students' learning experience does not include the classroom only, actually, the whole outside world in all its forms, either physical (travelling, face-to-face communication, etc) or virtual (e-books, digital repositories, MOOCs, databases, games, chatbots, etc) becomes a part of learning. There is one more aspect that should not be overlooked, the fact that students' learning experience does not include the classroom only, actually, the whole outside world in all its forms, either physical (travelling, face-to-face communication, etc) or virtual (e-books, digital repositories, MOOCs, databases, games, chatbots, etc) becomes a part of learning. Hence, the outside world should also be brought into the classroom, i.e. relevant up-to-date authentic materials (news reports, TED Talks, interviews, etc), as well as open educational resources, should be available to students.

For example, an extensive reading task for the topic "Storytelling" might be based on a page from Bill Gates's blog "5 books I loved reading this year".

Pre-reading tasks	1. Food for thought: a lot of successful people when asked about their background, mention the books they read. Is reading a crucial factor for success? 2. Play the game to learn the active vocabulary from the article: https://www.flippity.net/fc.php?k=1hHjFrw8C3eHXJG5d8HKDSmNEt-auYPV5q8Ga9e3YBc4
While-reading task	1. Read the gapped article and fill in the gaps with the word combinations given. 2. Watch the video interview with Bill Gates (given in the blog) and say which of the books he mentioned you have read. Which of them (if any) you would like to read? Why? 3. Revise the same word combinations via the game: https://www.flippity.net/ma.php?k=14OMVseehRbGMA4IJ8Fl_mAiQ2S1CHxunYyoQnv9NvkU
Post-reading task	1. Do the test based on the material covered in the previous tasks. 2. Present a book or books you would recommend your groupmates to read.

[1, 34]

Let's look at the advantages and disadvantages of using GPT chat in learning foreign languages. Among the advantages of GPT Chat in Learning Foreign Languages are [5, 12]:

Instant Feedback

One of the biggest advantages of using GPT chat in language learning is the instant feedback that it provides. Unlike traditional language learning methods where feedback can take a while to arrive, GPT chatbots can provide feedback immediately after a response is given. This allows learners to correct their mistakes in real-time and to continue learning without losing momentum.

Personalised Learning

GPT chatbots can be programmed to personalise the learning experience for each learner. Based on the learner's level and progress, the chatbot can provide tailored lessons and exercises that are relevant to their current level. This personalised approach can help learners stay motivated and engaged, as they are constantly challenged without feeling overwhelmed.

Accessible and Convenient

GPT chatbots are accessible and convenient to use. Learners can use them anytime, anywhere, as long as they have an internet connection. This makes language learning more accessible to people who may not have the time or resources to attend traditional language classes. Additionally, learners can use GPT chatbots at their own pace, without feeling rushed or pressured.

Realistic Conversations

GPT chatbots are designed to simulate realistic conversations between native speakers. This allows learners to practise their language skills in a natural and authentic way. By engaging in conversations with the chatbot, learners can improve their speaking, listening, and comprehension skills. This can help learners feel more confident when they have to use the language in real-life situations [4, 11].

Time-efficient

GPT chatbots can help learners save time. Since learners can access the chatbot anytime, they can fit language learning into their busy schedules. Additionally, GPT chatbots can help learners learn faster. By providing instant feedback and personalised lessons, learners can progress at a faster pace than they would with traditional learning methods.

What about the disadvantages of GPT Chat in Learning Foreign Languages?

Limited Vocabulary

GPT chatbots are programmed with a limited vocabulary. While they can simulate realistic conversations, they may not be able to understand or respond to every word or phrase that a learner uses. This can limit the learner's ability to practice using a wide range of vocabulary.

Lack of Cultural Context

GPT chatbots may not provide enough cultural context for language learners. Language learning is not just about learning words and grammar rules; it's also about understanding the cultural context in which the language is used. GPT chatbots may not be able to provide learners with enough cultural insights, which can lead to a shallow understanding of the language.

No Emotional Connection

GPT chatbots lack emotional intelligence. They cannot provide learners with the emotional connection that comes with human interaction. Learning a language involves more than just memorising words and grammar rules; it also involves building relationships and making connections with other people. GPT chatbots may not be able to provide learners with this important aspect of language learning.

Limited Pronunciation Practice

GPT chatbots may not provide enough opportunities for learners to practice their pronunciation. While they can provide feedback on grammar and vocabulary, they may not be able to detect subtle pronunciation errors.

Evidently, when speaking about online tools that can be used in and outside the classroom, the latest trend, which is using artificial intelligence, has to be mentioned. Actually, artificial intelligence (AI) has been used for some years already, but it is the appearance of ChatGPT that made it a topic of discussion.

In **conclusion**, distance learning has become an essential part of the educational process, especially during emergency situations, and has provided opportunities for both students and teachers. However, it also presents challenges such as a lack of confidence in technology, self-discipline, and lack of interaction. To overcome these issues, it is important to pay attention to the emotional well-being of both students and teachers, simplify the learning process, and choose user-friendly platforms.

Further research perspective: Future research could investigate the impact of technology on language learners' emotional well-being, autonomy, and motivation. Studies can explore how to enhance digital competence, adaptability, and self-discipline among learners. Furthermore, research can be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of online language learning compared to traditional classroom-based learning, and investigate how to integrate the advantages of both approaches. Additionally, research can focus on developing new technological tools and resources that can further enhance the language learning process.

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Андрейко Л. В., Медведовська Д. О., Скарлупіна Ю. А. Онлайн: перешкода чи можливість

У даній науковій статті розглянуті останні тенденції в розвитку дистанційного навчання, зокрема, викладання іноземних мов, а також їх актуальність, обумовлена викликами роботи за надзвичайних обставин, таких, як пандемія та війна. Автори статті зосереджують увагу на оптимізації навчального процесу та підвищенні мотивації студентів за допомогою широкого спектра можливостей використання онлайн-платформ, додатків для вивчення мов, відкритих освітніх ресурсів та штучного інтелекту відповідно до вимог часу. У статті виділені потенційні переваги та виклики онлайн-навчання. Перші надають викладачам численні можливості, тоді як останні наголошують на важливості звернення уваги на емоції в умовах технологічно опосередкованого викладання. У статті також описані можливості подолання технічних та психологічних проблем. Крім того, автори підкреслюють той факт, що необхідність цифрової компетентності та автономності студентів у використанні запропонованих інструментів є абсолютно критичною в наш час. Акцент також робиться на важливості створення автономного робочого середовища з дидактичними матеріалами та комунікаційними ресурсами. Автори наголошують на тому, що концепція "навчального середовища" змінюється протягом років через розвиток технологій. На завершення, у статті пропонуються зручні для користувачів платформи, які можуть слугувати засобами спрощення процесу навчання, а також чіткі інструкції для подолання загальних проблем, з якими зазвичай стикаються студенти та вчителі під час онлайн-навчання, такі як недостатня впевненість у технологіях та в самому собі, або, наприклад, необхідність працювати в групах різного рівня. Автори надають приклади використання платформ для спільної роботи, автентичних текстів та ігрових інструментів, маючи на меті проілюструвати способи адаптації процесу вивчення мови до поточної ситуації та конкретних потреб студентів. Особлива увага приділяється впровадженню штучного інтелекту, популярність якого останнім часом стрімко зростає, як потужному інструменту як для студентів, так і для викладачів іноземних мов.

Ключові слова: дистанційне навчання, засоби навчання онлайн, іноземні мови, цифрові компетенції, багаторівневі групи, ефективність навчання, мотивація, штучний інтелект.

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COMPLEX OF EXERCISES FOR TEACHING CIVIL ENGINEERING STUDENTS HOW TO WRITE A COVERING LETTER IN ENGLISH

The article presents a complex of exercises which can be used for teaching civil engineering students how to write an English-language covering letter. Taking into consideration crucial importance of job-seekers' business writing skills, namely their ability to write a covering letters to get the job they want, I consider it important to allocate at the minimum three double lessons, i.e. six academic hours, to teach students how to write a covering letter in English. During those classes students will have to do a complex of exercises, totaling up to fifteen specifically developed for that purpose. As long as a covering letter is a clichéd and standardized document and structure and form of covering letters is quite similar, it is expedient to teach students how to write a covering letter by using a combined text-genre and procedural approach. Therefore it is useful to use a complex of exercises that can be divided into the following three parts: "Presentation", "Vocabulary" and "Writing". When working with exercises from the first part, "Presentation", it is better for students to begin with a thorough analysis of samples of English-language covering letters and after that proceed to exercises connected with formatting of covering letters, such as finding required information in a covering letter; putting components of a covering letter in the correct order, etc. After getting acquainted with the structure of a covering letter, it is good to learn and practice new vocabulary necessary for writing an English-language