Distance learning in Russia during the coronavirus pandemic

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Abstract. This paper shows the distance learning in Russian during the coronavirus period in schools, technical schools and institutions. School and university students should keep up with the curriculum and continue to study even under quarantine. Distance learning has become a new form of remote educational process. Students can use publicly available electronic resources to continue their distance education. Currently, the distance learning technologies has helped schools, technical schools and universities to switch to distance learning, which allows them to receive effective feedback from the teacher.

1. Introduction

On March 11, 2020, the general director of the world health organization reported that the spread of COVID-19 can be described as a pandemic. It was from this moment that many countries of the world (including Russia) began to introduce quarantine, as a result of which various institutions, organizations and enterprises, including educational ones, suspended their activities or began to switch to new working conditions. Since certain sanitary and epidemiological restrictions were introduced, the regional authorities announced the self-isolation of citizens for the duration of the quarantine. As a result of self-isolation, many schoolchildren and students, as well as teachers, were unable to continue their studies and teaching activities with traditional education. Distance learning has become a new form of remote educational process [1-3].

Distance learning is one of the developing concepts of modern pedagogy. The term "Distance learning" appeared quite a long time ago (in England in the XVII century, and in Russia in the XIX century) and was originally used to refer to such forms of education as correspondence, correspondence training, and external studies. All these types of training include temporary or permanent spatial separation between the student and the school, the presence of distance in training [4,5]. The interaction of participants in the educational process in these forms of training is reduced to the exchange of information by mail and / or short-term contacts. New opportunities are opening up for organizing a complete learning process at a distance while reducing face-to-face contacts. The possibilities of developing these tools and the need to implement them in training have led to changes in traditional pedagogy, as well as the emergence of new educational technologies aimed at performing these functions.
Andreev A. A., Polat E. S., Soldatkin V. I., Khutorskoy A.V., Domrachev V. G. and others discussed the use of distance learning technologies in the educational process. There are various definitions of the concept "distance learning", reflecting some of its features. Table 1 shows several of them.

Table 1. Definition of the concept “distance learning”.

| №  | Author           | Content of the definition                                                                                                                                                                                                 |
|----|------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1  | Domrachev V.G.   | Distance learning is "a new stage of distance learning, which provides the use of information technologies based on the use of personal computers, video/audio equipment, space and fiber — optic technology" [6].                                      |
| 2  | Khutorskoy A.V.  | Distance learning is "learning by means of telecommunications, in which the subjects of training (students, teachers, tutors, etc.), having a spatial or temporal distance, carry out a General educational process aimed at creating external educational products and corresponding internal changes (increments) of the subjects of education" [7]. |
| 3  | Polat E. S.      | Distance learning is "a new form of learning, somewhat different from the usual forms of full – time or distance learning. It involves other means, methods, organizational forms of training, a different form of interaction between the teacher and students, students with each other. At the same time, like any form of education, any system of education, it has the same component composition: goals determined by the social order for all forms of education; content, also largely determined by the current programs for a particular type of educational institution, methods, organizational forms, and means of training" [8]. |
| 4  | Andreev A. A.    | Distance learning is "a synthetic, integrated, humanistic form of learning based on the use of a wide range of traditional and new information technologies and their technical means that are used to deliver educational material, study it independently, and organize a dialogue exchange between the teacher and the student, when the learning process is not critical to their location in space and time, as well as to a specific educational institution." |

The history of distance learning begins in 1969. The first distance learning university was opened in the UK. Then there were other universities – the Open University in Hagen (Germany, 1974), the national university of technology in the United States (1984), the Spanish national university of distance learning. In 1988, a joint project of the USSR and the USA "School e-mail" was implemented. The international Association "Znanie" and the Modern Academy of Humanities became pioneers of satellite technologies of distance learning in the 1990s. Thus, by 2005, the number of students enrolled in open distance education programs was 100 million, which exceeded the number of "traditional" students by three million [9].

Stages of distance learning development were defined in modern Russia in the 1990s. In 1993, a branch of ESCO (European school of management and technology) was opened in Russia. This program allows remotely learning English with the help of cassettes. At the end of the course, a certificate was issued. This
system was new, unusual, and interesting, and attracted many people. In 2004, a new stage in the development of distance learning in the form of future prospects began.

In the spring of 2020, many students, parents and teachers (especially the elderly) were not ready for such a sharp transition from traditional to distance learning [10,11]. Undoubtedly, distance learning during the quarantine period had its advantages over other forms of the educational process:

- flexible schedule of classes;
- high learning speed;
- highly qualified teachers;
- mass participation, when any number of people can be involved.

However, the disadvantages of distance learning were also identified:

- not everyone has the financial means to purchase an appropriate electronic device, and not everyone can afford high-quality communication. A certain number of school students and teachers did not have computers or laptops at all. Information networks could not withstand the load that suddenly fell on them, so the quality and speed of the Internet left much to be desired.
- the lack of direct teacher - student interaction, lack of live speech and emotional exchange worsen the perception of information and reduce the degree of understanding of the material [12]. The student needs direct contact with the teacher not only to explain the material, but also as the main motivating factor.
- lack of cognitive motivation. According to the study of education and technology by Katy Jordan, only 15% of students complete mass open online courses, such courses are ineffective for the remaining 85%. During the distance learning process, the role of the listener increases, therefore, this process requires a strong motivation from the student, the desire and ability to maintain the necessary pace of learning without constant control from the outside [13-15]. Distance learning, therefore, places high demands on the student's motivation for self-education, since the teacher performs only a coordinating function in remote learning, becoming a "pedagogical agent".
- the age structure of teachers, when many older teachers are not able to quickly adapt to changing learning conditions and need training themselves.

2. Results

Today, universities have experience in solving complex problems related to the current situation in connection with the coronavirus: streaming lectures via online platforms, interactive communication with students. In certain cases, the distance learning format is justified when it comes to personal consultations, especially when the student lives far from the university and spends several hours on the road. But the situation when training or student practices in medical, engineering or creative universities are organized exclusively in a remote format is unacceptable".

Also at a meeting on the current situation in the education system on May 21, President of Russia Vladimir Putin held a speech about education during coronavirus infection. Regarding the general transition to distance learning, he said that he considers the rumors about the transition to remote learning as a provocation, that distance learning will not replace traditional, which "educates and shapes the individual." It turns out that since personal communication with a teacher at this stage of our society development cannot be fully replaced by computer technologies, the traditional form of training using distance learning techniques remains a priority.
3. Conclusion
In modern conditions, traditional education is at contradiction with the traditions of the past and the developing technologies of the future. A student of a modern school who uses a smartphone, tablet, laptop, computer and other technological achievements simply cannot understand why the teacher gives him a "bad" for handwriting, where it can be useful when much in his life has already been digitized and computerized. Distance learning has proved that it has the right to exist along with other forms of education. Of course, it can't become independent yet, but distance learning together with traditional training – they could make a wonderful tandem.

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