Distance Learning and Globalization Processes in the Postmodern World

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Abstract: The article analyzes distance learning and educational processes, such as education, pedagogical technologies, methods and upbringing in the context of globalization trends in the postmodern world. The new technologies, which have prompted and eventually led to globalization processes, indicate the need to master these new technologies since teaching today requires one to apply one's professional results efficiently. The trend of education is globalization, which seems inevitable under a dramatically changing educational reality. Global education is defined as one of the areas in the development of current pedagogical theory and practice. It aims to prepare learners for professional activities in a changing and increasingly interdependent world. Indeed, globalization lies in implementing and using internet technologies in education. Recognizing the multiplicity of meanings and views, the postmodern society is entering a state of crisis. It is because the Covid-19 pandemic and, consequently, new living conditions associated with it, require a new worldview. In this regard, education reforms are becoming a priority, given that the 21st century is the age of information and nanotechnologies. Information technology is a prerequisite for teacher training today. At the same time, informatization of education is impossible without creating, using and developing informational and educational environments, which in turn should enable the realization of an intellectually developed individual embodying the necessary professional qualities.

Keywords: *globalization challenges, interactive learning, education and upbringing, globalization of education, informatization of education.*

1. Introduction

In the last decade, the educational system has undergone significant changes, and this concerns teaching methods and effective ways to present new material to students. The new technologies, which have prompted and eventually led to globalization processes, indicate the need to master these new technologies since teaching today requires one to apply one's professional results efficiently.

Today, students view higher education as a certain transition of learners from objects to subjects, who obtain the necessary knowledge and competencies and learn how to evaluate their learning outcomes adequately. They do it both individually and together with other actors in the educational process. Another trend of education is globalization, which seems inevitable under a dramatically changing educational reality. Global education is defined as one of the areas in the development of current pedagogical theory and practice. It aims to prepare learners for professional activities in a changing and increasingly interdependent world. It is because globalization lies in implementing and using internet technologies in education (Nerubasska, & Maksymchuk, 2020; Melnyk et al., 2019; Sheremet, Leniv, Loboda, & Maksymchuk, 2019; Gerasymova et al., 2019; Onishchuk et al, 2020; Bakhmat et al., 2019).

Recognizing the multiplicity of meanings and views, the postmodern society is entering a state of crisis. It is because the Covid-19 pandemic and, consequently, new living conditions associated with it, require a new worldview. In this regard, education reforms are becoming a priority.

2. Features of Interactive and Distance Learning

Today, higher education tends to favour interactivity, innovation and informatization of education, which lies in the impact of globalization on the educational space worldwide.

The current educational paradigm considers learning as a cognitive activity which improves knowledge, skills and abilities, as well as student's personality. Indeed, such activity enhances intellect, cultivates certain personality traits and facilitates psychological changes towards self-realization.

The latest pedagogical technologies are not that different. A personality-oriented approach is somewhat episodic. Indeed, it is used at different learning stages and/or in certain types of educational work, without taking into account students' characteristics (Rodnyakov, 2007, p. 118).

Education relies on such principles as humanity, integration, universality and continuity. At the same time, self-actualization, consistency and dialogics create conditions for developing students' individuality. Individual learning implies students' participation in creating learning routes. Besides, it motivates them towards independent work and successful completion of the degree programme.

Interactive learning is a technology ensuring feedback between learning subjects and objects, which lies in a constant two-way exchange of information. Such an organization of the educational process enables every student to participate in it. It is so because an interactive model of learning involves using an individual approach to every student and organizing comfortable learning conditions and cooperation between learners.

The interactivity of methods lies in continuous interaction with students and the use of audio and visual aids. Generally, such classes are productive and increase students' interest in the course (Zhernova, 2018, p. 173). An important aspect of such learning is periodic changes in learning activities to avoid a loss of focus on the material.

The learning process should be specially balanced since it is essential to learn and retransmit pedagogical methods and technologies which developing professional learning skills. Interactive classes require teachers' professionalism and experience.

Some experts claim that there are two different ways of developing professional competence (traditional and innovative). The traditional way lies in transferring knowledge and methods of action, intended for productive learning, to pupils in a ready form. Importantly, the only actor is the teacher. The innovative way is focused on situational knowledge, which allows using it in practice and, in turn, ensures professional and creative learning (Doliner, 2003a, p. 53).

Distance learning has emerged due to the Internet. There is still no consensus on its effectiveness: both positive and negative arguments are equally important. The effectiveness of distance learning depends on students' motivation and reasonable use of the latest technologies since incoming information is not always reliable.

Researchers indicate that the Internet manages constant and large flows of information, although the impact of new technologies depends entirely on people's critical thinking (Hartmeyer, 2018).

It is important to note that distance learning plays a special role in the educational process since it maintains the dialogue between university teachers and students through the computer network. Experts believe that, as the result of information technology development, about 35% of total

study time is expected to be spent on distance learning, 40% – on traditional forms of full-time education, 25% – on self-education (Kot, Zotova, & Ustinov, 2018, p. 33). Therefore, it is essential to pay more attention to scientific and pedagogical research in the field of distance learning and education.

Distance learning became widespread at the British Open University in London in 1969. Its analogues, such as e-learning and e-tutoring, soon appeared in North America and Western Europe. Subsequently, distance learning has spread around the world (Tarnavska, 2019, p. 14). Social, economic and pedagogical attractiveness of distance learning in educational institutions lies in high efficiency of learning, low cost of educational services, various study duration, admissibility of parallel education in other institutions and independence from the geographical location of the institution.

Also, online education is suitable for foreigners and people with special educational needs. It allows learners to choose a pace of learning and provides free access to databases and information resources. It involves a convenient system of managing students' records, rapid exchange of information and testing in direct access mode. The new paradigm of education aims to create conditions for learning and develop well-educated and well-mannered professionals thinking critically and striving to integrate into the world information space.

The latest computer technologies and telecommunication interaction allow one to create multilevel models of learning. These models correspond to different training levels and students' psychological features (thinking speed, memory development).

Computerized tools serve as the basis of today's education and contribute to the emergence of new methods of organizing and conducting the educational process. Besides, they realize personal-oriented and pragmatist approaches which involve obtaining information about students' progress and correcting mistakes. The introduction of computer technology allows one to design a learning environment for independent work at an individual pace and use the rights of access to information resources for self-training and reflection (Doliner, 2003c, p. 116).

Personal and creative activities of students act as the dominant system of distance learning. The integration of information and pedagogical technologies ensures the interaction between educational entities, as well as increases the productivity of the educational process, in which the exchange of information plays a supporting role.

As of today, one uses the following types of distance learning with innovative elements: a) portfolios and case studies: a set of teaching materials on CDs and paper for self-study; b) training-oriented case studies: the use of situational training methods; c) TV; d) the Internet; e) local networks; f) satellites: the implementation of distance learning in local networks through satellite communication channels; g) classes for students in training centres; h) attestation of students by the visiting attestation commission; i) correspondence: the use of letters; j) radio.

The first five types of training are the most effective today. Others are used less frequently due to the short life of technological methods and technical means (Blinov, Dulinov, Yesenina, & Sergeev, 2019). After all, scientific and technological progress is associated with the informatization of the spheres of society and the promotion of critical thinking. In addition to traditional teaching materials, mass open online courses are often used to achieve this goal. They offer interactive user forums and support communities of university teachers and students.

The advantages of using information technology in education are as follows: transmission of information of any volume and type; interactivity; organization of electronic conferences; learning time flexibility. According to the degree of remotability, individualization and productivity, there are five types of distance learning: 1) educational institution − Internet (solving issues of traditional learning); 2) educational institution − Internet − educational institution (reinforcing in-person learning with more intensive electronic forms); 3) student − Internet − university teacher (partially replacing in-person learning: distance learning courses, seminars, tutorials); 4) student − Internet − centre (strengthening the personal focus of learning and providing a choice of forms, pace and level of learning due to telecommunication technologies); 5) student − Internet (distributing educational processes in space and time).

Today, one can observe the introduction of the following distance technologies: a) individual differentiated and modular learning; b) cooperative and problem-based learning; c) internet technologies; 4) the project method; 5) collaborative learning; 6) game-based technologies (Somko, 2012, p. 161). The basis of distance learning is the independent work of students. The system of distance earning integrates computer-aided and global communications using the information dissemination mechanism to provide two-way feedback from students to university teachers, regardless of the place of residence and time of communication. One should pay particular attention to the use of information technology, such as database

management systems, text and graphic editors, spreadsheets, multimedia materials.

Besides, certain learning technologies play a special role in assessing the effectiveness of the learning system. These are methods for developing a system of knowledge, skills and abilities; profitability of the educational process; the reasonable pricing policy.

Below one can see how university teachers determine the purpose of using innovative technologies. About 56% of university teachers use these technologies to develop research skills; 40% of them − computer skills, 37% of them − information retrieval culture; 33% of them − skills in collective and group work (Verbytska, & Syzonenko, 2020, p. 101).

The effectiveness of using distance learning depends on technical and theoretical educational facilities. At the same time, teachers' and students' interest in the educational process plays an important role, too.

3. Globalization of Educational Space and the Emergence of Global Pedagogy

When education relies on such principles as humanity, integration, universality and continuity, it creates conditions for cultivating students' individuality and national identity.

Internationalization and integration have become the basis of education globalization at all levels. Today, one can identify the following factors contributing to it: 1) rapid development of information technologies, which leads to the integration of regional educational systems; 2) social demand for tolerance, which can be explained by many critical political phenomena; 3) many people's willingness to consider the Western way of life as a model; the consumption ideology.

It is essential to prioritize informatization since the increasing globalization of education happens along with the development of information systems. One of the main objectives of today's education is to use the latest information technologies, given that they allow one to implement lifelong learning.

Globalization is a large-scale process that brings the following positive opportunities: 1) access to information from anywhere in the world via the Internet 2) free communication and exchange of knowledge without territorial restrictions; 3) the emergence of new programmes and courses; their integration with traditional approaches to education; 4) prospects for people with special educational needs; 5) global sharing of knowledge, skills and intellectual resources; 6) favourable conditions for international

understanding, cooperation, coherence and recognition of cultural differences between countries and regions (Ignatova, 2017, p. 64).

These advantages make online learning in demand among working professionals, young mothers, students, people with special educational needs, people serving in the army, residents of remote areas.

Negative features of education globalization are as follows: 1) the increasing technological gap and "digital barrier" between the developed and underdeveloped countries; 2) the elimination of indigenous educational cultures in the developing countries in the interests of a small group of the developed countries; 3) the increasing scale of cultural borrowings between different countries, which can lead to a loss of identity.

As a result of education globalization, there may arise the so-called "global pedagogy" which should unify methodological approaches to learning. Indeed, globalization has both positive and negative sides. Yet, it is important to note that their ratios are different for different school subjects. Regarding foreign languages, globalization has more advantages than disadvantages, whereas it is no longer so positive for history. At the same time, many school subjects are almost unaffected by globalization, in particular, mathematics or physical education (Zabelina, 2012, p. 245). Globalization does allow one to acquire more knowledge much easier than before, although it does not cause significant changes.

Thus, globalization of education should not be total. It is vital to apply a differentiated approach to various school subjects. Especially those closely linked to national identity should be the least exposed to globalization. Globalization is a qualitatively new stage of internationalization, whose specific features are the unity of the world based on the latest information technologies; the need for cooperation in the face of threats from global problems; the rapprochement of cultures and peoples.

Despite all the converging trends, educational systems in different countries are very different at the moment. It is so because breaking national educational traditions would be unwise and lead to a cultural catastrophe in many countries. The issue of national identity is related to all spheres of human life affected by globalization (Bykov, Hurzhiy, & Shyshkina, 2018, p. 24) since national borders lose their significance. Experts highlight the declining role of national education and make attempts to restore the importance of historical and cultural traditions of the peoples, which does not allow globalization to develop fully.

Globalization of education is once again hampered by the fact that the majority of the population in some countries does not speak a foreign language at a sufficient level, especially English (Doliner, 2003b, p. 126).

There are no curricula and textbooks harmonized with foreign ones, which blocks education globalization at many levels.

Education globalization is also associated with labour migration, and this process is only expected to intensify. Knowledge is a particular product that has become part of the international market of educational services. Another important trend is the growing number of countries exporting educational services worldwide. Until recently, China imported educational services worth a total of five to six billion dollars a year; the country has been actively exporting educational services for the past three years.

Recent trends in education globalization are as follows:

1. The increasing demand for higher education worldwide. This is because more educated people have a high income, which is highly valued in society. Higher education has ceased to be accessible only to certain social strata.

2. The demand for education quality has grown, too. Educational institutions are equipped with computers; every student can access educational information from anywhere in the world; online libraries are becoming international.

3. Corruption is being 1 eradicated. Phenomena such as exam bribery other abuses of office in education are prosecuted and punished by law (Kinnunen, & Georgescu, 2020, p. 58).

In general, innovation development is one of the main areas of education. Educational institutions are striving to transform the learning environment by considering national and institutional aspects of online teaching and learning. It is extremely essential to address and solve such issues as providing accessible education to children with special needs, creating an effective system of children's socialization, identifying and developing young talents. It becomes necessary to develop human resources, promote succession of generations and increase the efficiency of science by tools of managing students' records.

An important trend and need today is the openness of education, which ensures mobility and effectiveness of the educational process worldwide. Part-time educational organizations appear to be established more and more often, and tutors replace teachers. Interactivity becomes the main pedagogical tool within electronic educational resources (Dzvinchuk, Radchenko, Kachmar, Myskiv, & Dolinska, 2020, p. 140). It is the latest technologies that bring unlimited possibilities to postmodern educational systems. Open education aims to prepare active students under the conditions of information society development. Learning activity acts as a means of developing each person and society as a whole. The educational

process is increasingly becoming part of the business sector and the object of investment.

Globalization is gradually but steadily penetrating all spheres of public life and, in particular, education. It affects the formulation of goals, content, forms and means of education in different types of educational institutions (Balabanov, & Fokina, 2001). Educational institutions should provide students with knowledge that will allow them to achieve high social status.

Some researchers claim that the key factor in education globalization is generality and homogeneity of knowledge forms (Lopatin, Krivoruchko, & Shust, 2019, p. 109). Another important factor is the international competition of national educational systems, which is characterized by differences in status, scale and impact on world culture. Besides, the increasing attention to education globalization depends on the following factors: 1) a systemic approach determined by arrangement, analysis and prediction of globalization processes; 2) the participation of educational institutions in such areas and forms of globalization as internationalization, integration, coordination, cooperation and unification in the field of professional education; 3) the establishment and development of the global market of higher education; 4) the creation of transnational educational corporations; 5) informatization of education, which is considered as both resource and technology of student learning management; 6) convergence manifested in the interpenetration of educational and social systems; 7) international cooperation in the system of higher education; 8) standardization (Osipov, Kudryavtsev, Galimova, Plotnikova, & Skurikhina, 2020, p. 82).

Thus, globalization as a manifestation of the postmodern reality is unpredictable in terms of its development. Consequently, one needs to learn to live in a changing world. Education and upbringing act as both a tool and basis for such an action (Cha, 2018). Besides, there appears to be an urgent need for knowledge about the creation, production and adaptation of new strategies for human survival, which leads to changes in educational paradigms. The postmodernist paradigm of knowledge tends to openness, ambiguity in its interpretation and unplanned development in accordance with the realities of a constantly changing world (Beck, 2010). A clear example of such changes is the global pandemic. Indeed, no country has been prepared for such a challenge, and no community alone can provide an adequate response to such a challenge. The education system is no exception. The effectiveness of educational systems is under threat, which is

why one should update them, taking into account the ongoing processes and human capabilities (Carr, 1998; Tabrizi, 2016).

One can consider the postmodern world to be overloaded with information, given the existing cybernetic theories. However, the information society indicates only the conditions of existence, while the postmodernism as a phenomenon reveals trends (Giroux, & Aronowtiz, 1991; Hossieni, & Khalili, 2011). Information has become available to all segments of the population in democratic societies. The digitalization of all spheres of human life is becoming a trend and an urgent need. Still, the difference between digital data, information and knowledge is significant. This is where the postmodern education comes in handy. After all, it emphasizes trends in the development of the information space, improves information literacy and promotes awareness of one's choices. Teachers and students learn to distinguish information from knowledge, analyzing life experiences and trends in world history (Lyotard, 1984; Gross, Davies, & Diab, 2013). Postmodern educational theories, as descendants of modern deductive systems, divide information into segments and provide it to students within the knowledge system. Basically, the key task of the postmodern education is to practice information segmentation skills to understand the systemic nature of the world, which is relevant for the entire globalized world (Usher, & Edwards, 1994). The systemic perception of the world and its ongoing processes is also quite debatable. The teacher of the new postmodern paradigm constantly interacts with the student, encourages scientific research and discoveries, not limited to educational experience (Zeeman, Poggenpoel, Myburgh, & van der Linde, 1998; Bloland, 1995). It enables one to create a new educational reality, namely, the reality of the postmodern education.

4. Conclusions

Globalization processes can have a significant impact on educational policy since they are becoming the driving force of national goals. The emergence of export earnings expands the tertiary sector of the economy while acting as an international characteristic of the country's educational system, its international competitiveness in education. Globalization of education is followed by the growing role of the market of educational services, the spread of entrepreneurial approaches to education, new opportunities related to the improvement of information and communication technologies, the creation of virtual universities and the development of transnational education.

The 21st century is the age of information and nanotechnologies. Information technology is a prerequisite for teacher training today. At the same time, informatization of education is impossible without creating, using and developing informational and educational environments, which in turn should enable the realization of an intellectually developed individual embodying the necessary professional qualities.

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