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GENERAL NOTES ON DISTANCE EDUCATION AND ITS POTENTIAL IN LANGUAGE EDUCATION

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It is widely known that the main focus of teaching foreign languages is to develop language learners' skills to communicate in the target language effectively and appropriately. In other words, it can be noted that for effective and appropriate communication in a foreign language, a learner is required to acquire a foreign language for communication purposes. This assumption means that nowadays a foreign language should be taught for real meaningful purposes which can be achieved through communication-oriented contexts. In order to achieve this goal, it is important to follow the main principles of language teaching and learning in modern methodology of foreign language education. One of the key principles of teaching foreign languages is to online learning principles, especially, in the period of such COVID-19 period, to develop language skills of learners and make learners reach a desired level at the end of the course.

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According to Venkata Subrahmanyam, K. Ravichandran's information on distance education definition,"*distance education or distance learning is a field of education that focuses on teaching methods and technology with the aim of delivering teaching, often on an individual basis, to students who are not physically present in a traditional educational setting such as a classroom. It has been described as "a process to create and provide access to learning when the source of information and the learners are separated by time and distance, or both"*
[4, 5].

The increasing effect of distance learning is encouraging school staff to consider the possibilities for distance-learning technology in school education and adopt distance-learning instruction for pedagogical purposes, especially, for language pedagogy as well. According to Susan Kay Miller
,there is a huge impact of the distance learning in the field of composition, "
where scholars and teachers in computers and writing are beginning to examine the impact of distance education on writing instruction. Several are calling for critical examination of new technologies for writing instruction specifically the possibilities and limitations of using distance-learning technology
"[3, 423].

According to Venkata Subrahmanyam, K. Ravichandran, there are three types of available methods used in distanceeducation. They are as follows: 1. Synchronous Learning; 2. Asynchronous Learning; 3. Hybrid / Blended Learning.

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Synchronous learning technology is a mode of delivery where all participants are "present" at the same time. It resembles traditional classroom teaching methods despite the participants being located remotely. It requires a timetable to be organized. Web conferencing, videoconferencing, educational television, Instructional television are examples of synchronous technology, as are direct-broadcast satellite (DBS), internet radio, live streaming, telephone, and web-based learning [4, 7]. Asynchronous learning mode of delivery is where participants access course materials on their own schedule and so is more flexible. Students are not required to be together at the same time. Mail correspondence, which is the oldest form of distance education, is an asynchronous delivery technology and others include message board forums, e-mail, video and audio recordings, print materials, voicemail and fax. Hybrid learning (blended learning) blend face-to-face interaction such as in-class discussions, active group work, and live lectures with typically web-based educational technologies such as online course cartridges, assignments, discussion boards, and other web-assisted learning tools [4, 8].

Frederick B. Kingand others say that distance education encompasses a vast array of possible situations. However, these situations can be grouped within two major categories, each with its own constraints. The two categories are: synchronous and asynchronous distance education. Synchronous situations provide affordances that allow "real-time" interaction between student and instructor. Synchronous situations are time sensitive but geographically insensitive. In contrast, asynchronous situations do not provide affordances that allow for "realtime" interaction between student and instructor. Asynchronous situations are both time and geographically insensitive [1, 12-13].Meaghan Listerclaim that there are four main factors when selecting components to incorporate into the design of e-learning and online courses: 1) course structure, 2) content presentation, 3) collaboration and interaction, and 4) timely feedback [2, 677]. So, it can be said that distance learning can encourage some learning opportunities as discussed above and it can be implemented on language education process as well.

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