


# Distance Learning Experience in the Context of Globalization of Education


## Experiencia de aprendizaje a distancia en el contexto de la globalización de la educación

**Tatyana Nikolaevna Poddubnaya** 

Kuban State University of Physical Education, Sports and Tourism, Krasnodar, Russia  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8965-075X>

**Elena Leonidovna Zadneprovskaya** 


Kuban State University of Physical Education, Sports and Tourism, Krasnodar, Russia  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3540-9458>

**Svetlana Sergeevna Voevodina** 


Kuban State University of Physical Education, Sports and Tourism, Krasnodar, Russia  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5189-6888>

**Nadezhda Alexandrovna Ilyinova** 

Adyghe State University, Maykop, Russia  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4626-5947>

**Fatima Ramazanovna Khatit** 

Adyghe State University, Maykop, Russia  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4153-2743>

**Elena Alexandrovna Panina** 

Maykop State Technological University, Maykop, Russia  
ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4998-5333>

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### \*Correspondencia

Email: [rkhosrorad@yahoo.com](mailto:rkhosrorad@yahoo.com)

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## Summary

Today, the digitalization of education is one of the main tasks of the state social policy and an urgent sphere of life in modern society. At the beginning of 2020, the spread of COVID-19 forced educational institutions to introduce urgently all levels of distance learning technologies focused on the possibility to learn remotely and in real-time. The research focuses on the need to create an effective mechanism for organizing distance learning in the context of the globalization of education. The purpose of the research is to reveal the experience of distance learning in the context of globalization of education (based on the analysis of using the online learning platform Moodle). The results of the research reveal the prerequisites for the popularization of distance learning technologies in the practice of educational institutions, present the experience of using Moodle in the university educational process and determine the prospects of distance learning in educational practice.

**Keywords:** distance learning, globalization of education, electronic informational and educational environment, e-learning, e-learning technologies, information and communication platform, online platform Moodle.

## Resumen

Hoy, la digitalización de la educación es una de las principales tareas de la política social estatal y un ámbito urgente de vida en la sociedad moderna. A principios de 2020, la difusión del COVID-19 obligó a las instituciones educativas a introducir de forma urgente todos los niveles de tecnologías de educación a distancia enfocadas en la posibilidad de aprender de forma remota y en tiempo real. La investigación se centra en la necesidad de crear un mecanismo eficaz para organizar la educación a distancia en el contexto de la globalización de la educación. El propósito de la investigación es revelar la experiencia del aprendizaje a distancia en el contexto de la globalización de la educación (basado en el análisis del uso de la plataforma de aprendizaje en línea Moodle). Los resultados de la investigación revelan los prerequisites para la popularización de las tecnologías de educación a distancia en la práctica de las instituciones educativas, presentan la experiencia del uso de Moodle en el proceso educativo universitario y determinan las perspectivas del aprendizaje a distancia en la práctica educativa.

**Palabras clave:** educación a distancia, globalización de la educación, ambiente informativo y educativo electrónico, e-learning, tecnologías de e-learning, plataforma de información y comunicación, plataforma en línea Moodle.

## Introduction

*The relevance of the research.* Today, distance education is one of the most demanded and rapidly developing contexts of educational practice at all levels. The transition of all educational institutions to new conditions of teaching academic disciplines due to the coronavirus pandemic spreading in 2020 supports the above-mentioned statement. This circumstance caused the need for educational institutions to solve several problems: to find the ways of interaction between the educational process participants in a virtual environment, master web technologies and services and acquire skills of searching, exchanging and transforming information, which are the main requirements of the globalization of education in the new socio-cultural realities. The use of electronic informational and educational sources in the educational process during the pandemic was “the only opportunity to continue the learning process and to prevent the termination of the educational process” (Koreneva et al., 2020).

*The purpose of the research:* to reveal the experience of distance learning at a university, based on the analysis of using the online learning platform Moodle.

*The objectives of the research:* to identify the essence of distance learning; to describe the ways of organizing classes using distance learning technologies; to present the experience of using Moodle; to identify the advantages and prospects of distance learning in modern realities.

*Previous studies on the problem.* A significant amount of research has recently been devoted to the problem of distance learning. D.V. Budantsev presented a review of publications devoted to e-learning for the period 2016-2020. According to this review, the peak of scientific research on the problem was in 2020 (Budantsev, 2020). This happened due to the forced transition of all the economic spheres to a remote format because of a sudden deterioration of the epidemiological situation in the first half of 2020.

The research touches upon a wide range of distance learning problems, such as the electronic information and educational environment of an educational institution (Kozlova et al., 2019); the use of the electronic informational and educational environment of a university (Zadneprovskaya, Poddubnaya, 2020; Poddubnaya, 2020; Poddubnaya et al., 2020) , including information and communicational platforms (Koreneva et al., n. d.; Panina, 2020), mobile learning technologies using mobile devices (Vaganova et al., 2020) and cloud services (Kabanova, Vetrova, 2019; Kabanova, 2020; Gambeeva, Sorokina, 2018). Despite the ambiguity of teachers' views on the use of distance learning technologies, most studies confirm the significant role of the educational environment of distance learning in providing the opportunity for students to master the educational program in full.

Nevertheless, the problem of introducing distance learning in educational practice requires further theoretical justification and generalization of experience, which confirms the relevance of this article.

## Methods

The informational and analytical framework of the research was made up of information taken from the official Internet sites. The study was carried out based on the Faculty of Service and Tourism of the Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Education "Kuban State University of Physical Culture, Sport and Tourism". The following scientific methods were applied: theoretical (analysis and generalization of the experience of using distance education technologies in the Kuban State University of Physical Culture, Sport and Tourism, comparison, analogy method) and empirical (observation, study of the products of educational activity, description).

## Results and Discussion

The origins of distance learning date back to the 18th century and are connected with the advertisement of a self-study book for students with the possibility to correspond with a mentor published in the Boston Gazette in 1728. There is even a version that this method of teaching has existed since biblical times, and the alias of distance learning is mentioned in the epistles of the apostles (What is Distance Learning? The Benefits of Studying Remotely, n. d.).

According to many researchers, distance learning began to develop in the 1980s and was associated with the advent of computers. However, the imperfection of computer software and the impossibility of making a computer as a means of teaching available to all slowed down the process of active development of distance learning. The intensive development began at the beginning of the 2000s, which was associated with the widespread use of computers, which significantly expanded the range of their use, including educational purposes. The number of schools and educational institutions offering distance learning through online courses began to grow. As a rule, a combined model of full-time education and distance learning was used (Vasilina et al., 2017; What is Distance Learning? The Benefits of Studying Remotely, n. d.).

Distance education is equated with e-learning, such synonyms as “online learning” and “virtual learning” are often used. The main idea of these concepts is the teaching method based on the use of multimedia and Internet technologies to increase the availability and quality of education (Gambееva, Sorokina, 2018). Such approach to the educational process organization competes with traditional forms of education, providing an opportunity for any person to receive education and master new skills throughout their life, using the sources of searching, analysing and processing information (Gambееva, Sorokina, 2018).

Today, distance learning involves several information and communication platforms: Moodle, Zoom, iSpring, WebTutor, Google Classroom, Microsoft Teams (Panina, 2020). Table 1 presents the ways of organizing classes using distance technologies..

**Table (1):** Ways of organizing classes using distance technologies (Koreneva et al., 2020; Poddubnaya et al., 2020)

Educational activity	Distance learning technologies	Monitoring
Lecture	Video lecture, training video, webinar, interactive or online presentation	Quiz, report, visual survey
Seminar (practical lesson)	Online seminar, online forum, virtual workshop, panel discussion, forum	Quiz, report, visual survey, business game
Test	INDIGO testing system, online presentation	Quiz, individual task
Independent work	Online presentation, assignment, discussion on the forum	Report, visual survey, quiz, individual task
Practice	Forum, post	Report
Term paper	Forum, online discussion, online presentation	Report
Thesis	Forum, online discussion, online presentation	Report

Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment) is an online learning platform, which plays the role of an innovative and most optimally adapted to the university educational process electronic information and communication source. This platform allows teachers to develop online courses and educational websites devoted to any discipline; it can provide distance learning from anywhere with the help of the Internet and a computer or a modern mobile device (Sistema distantsionnogo obucheniya Moodle, chto eto takoe i kak eyu polzovatsya, n. d.). The online platform performs the functions of creating and storing electronic educational materials and managing their sequence in the educational process. The electronic format allows using not only text as in a textbook, but also interactive sources of any format (information from Wikipedia, videos from YouTube, etc.), storing them in the system and organizing them with the help of labels, tags and hyperlinks (Otkrytye tekhnologii, n. d.).

On the Moodle platform, each teacher creates a personal profile or personal account. The personal account includes a home page, courses and information block. Colleagues have an opportunity to include each other in their courses, for example, when the course is taught by two or more teachers, the practice is supervised by two or more methodologists, etc. In this case, courses are also displayed automatically in the personal account.

The platform also allows the teacher to upload a task for a seminar with the specification about its date and the group number according to the schedule. The server provides the ability to change the settings of students' works, for example, date, time, number and volume of files.

The platform provides an opportunity for each teacher to be creative while designing the course. The selection button allows including a variety of elements: glossary, assignment, lecture materials, survey, forum, chat, link to a book, folder, file, etc. The platform provides an opportunity to see students' attendance.

The "News Forum" section includes message exchange. It can be used to involve all the participants in information exchange. The teacher can write a message about the beginning of the lesson, its topic, the specifics of the course, the date and form of submission of the completed assignments.

During the lessons, the teacher keeps in touch with the students using the chat, which allows communicating synchronously in real-time on the Moodle platform.

The current course may also contain a list of recommended literature, assignments for independent work, credit or exam requirements and assignments for seminars. During seminars, teachers can in real-time receive information about the number of answers given by students and statistics of their assessment, as well as write comments on their answers.

Thus, the use of information and communication platforms in distance education made it possible to conclude that the online platform Moodle is quite optimal and effectively designed for organizing the distance learning process. This platform can be used as an up-to-date innovative digital educational source that allows being educated online.

The review of the research devoted to distance learning problems, as well as our experience of teaching at the university, made it possible to identify the advantages of distance learning:

1. Overcoming geographic barriers. Distance learning can connect learners all over the world.
2. Flexible hours of classes with the ability to change the time.
3. The possibility to use it as an additional source to full-time education or an alternative for those who cannot attend classes offline for certain reasons.
4. A simplified way of organizing educational activities for teachers.
5. Opportunity to study educational material during the entire educational period of study if it is necessary.
6. Reducing material costs (accommodation, transport, etc.).
7. Development of students' sense of responsibility, self-discipline and self-organization (Poddubnaya et al., 2020; Vaganova et al., 2020; What is Distance Learning? The Benefits of Studying Remotely, n. d.).

All this allows us to consider distance learning to be a source for expanding the boundaries of educational opportunities, social and personal development, both for teachers and students.

## Conclusion

We formulated the following fundamental conclusions.

1. Distance learning refers to a teaching method based on the use of multimedia and Internet technologies to increase the availability and quality of education.
2. Ways of organizing classes using distance learning technologies are: video lectures, training videos, webinars, interactive or online presentations, panel discussions, forums, business games, online tests, analysis of cases, etc.

3. The online platform Moodle is quite optimal and effectively designed for organizing distance learning process, within which it is possible to communicate synchronously in real-time, to unload the assignments and to monitor their performance, to set response modes, etc.

4. The advantages of distance learning include: overcoming geographical barriers in the communication of students, who can communicate regardless of location; flexible hours of classes; the possibility to use it as an additional source to full-time education or an alternative; the opportunity to be educated for people with special needs (people with disabilities); a simplified way of organizing educational activities for teachers; reducing material costs (there are no costs for accommodation, transport, etc.); stimulating the development of students' personal qualities (responsibility, self-discipline and self-organization).

Today, virtual reality is an innovation for the modern educational environment. Its main structural components are electronic educational sources, a set of information and telecommunication technologies, the corresponding technological means that form the basis of distance learning. All this is a response to the challenges of the new realities, which allow expanding the limits of scientific knowledge and educational practice.

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