# Organization of Online Language Learning for Students of Non-Linguistic Specialties

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*The paper focuses on organizing the educational process based on the example of learning a foreign language. First, we demonstrated the research relevance and highlighted the basics of successful distance learning. Then, we examined the concept of "comfort" in the educational process as the main component of effective learning. We also studied the psychological comfort in distance learning. The paper aims to identify the degree of comfort of the learning environment in a distant format to develop practical recommendations. Furthermore, we used questionnaires to determine the level of tension in the educational process, which is the opposite value of comfort: the higher the tension of students, the lower their comfort. Following S. V. Levchenko, we compiled the general emotional portrait of students' attitudes to distance learning. The survey involved 87 students. Using statistical methods, we interpreted the results to make practical recommendations on organizing the learning process online most efficiently. The importance of psychological comfort as the primary mechanism in the organization of education, including distance learning, was emphasized.*

*Keywords: organization, educational process, distance learning, psychological comfort, level of tension*

## INTRODUCTION

Currently, the issue of organizing the educational process in the context of distance learning is particularly acute. The research on the conditions, means, practical techniques, and other factors related to online technologies comes to the fore. Education involves dialogue and communication between the teacher and the student, which cannot be reduced to mechanical knowledge transfer (technocratic approach). Education is communication between two or more people with their needs, goals, objectives, and desires. The humanitarian approach to learning primarily means an inevitable "co-existence," "co-experience," and "co-touch" with ignorance. There is a two-way exchange of emotions, feelings, and knowledge in all processes. The informative block of the learning content must be experienced, entailing a specific discovery of oneself and something new, unknown.

Learning a foreign language is based on the organization of the communicative space. Therefore, distance learning provides new opportunities while simultaneously imposing other restrictions. In this case, we determined the features of the process of learning a foreign language in the conditions of online education.

Studies demonstrate that the wise use of modern computer technologies (particularly the internet) can significantly increase the efficiency in teaching and learning foreign languages.

The paper aims to study effective techniques and methods for organizing online learning of a foreign language. We proposed one of such methods for studying and subsequently improving the comfort of the learning environment with all participants in the pedagogical process. For this purpose, we studied the main concepts from different positions and gave helpful comments on improving the learning language environment.

There are many works devoted to the use of internet technologies in education. The scholars (Amirova, 2014; Khasanova, 2015; Kisarin, 2014; Stepanova E.N., Pogrebnaya I.F., 2008; Vinogradova & Fedurko, 2014) emphasized the importance and necessity of using computer technologies for distance learning. The practice of teaching and learning foreign languages shows that telecommunication technologies have every reason to assert their effectiveness (Lomova, 2007). The international computer network provides various information. Simultaneously, the participants in the educational process consume knowledge embedded in the information block of the internet, creating, writing their texts, and acting as authors. According to V. P. Demkin, the internet increases the motivation of foreign language learners, exerting a positive influence on the entire learning process, making authentic materials accessible, enhancing communicative interaction, and ensuring independence from one and sometimes the only source of information (Demkin, 2003). On the one hand, authentic original material is an indispensable aid for successful foreign language learning, and its availability on the internet facilitates the path to success. On the other hand, only a teacher can discover and convey this material. Therefore, indirect communication between a teacher and a student is the primary feature of learning a foreign language in a distance format. The primary components of the successful organization of distance learning include (1) effective interaction between the teacher and the student, (2) the technologies used for interaction, (3) the effectiveness of the developed teaching materials, and (4) feedback productivity (Rogova, 2013).

V. P. Demkin enumerated many effective characteristics of distance learning (Demkin, 2003):

- Formulate goals and objectives for the student as clearly as possible: all actions of the teacher should be transparent and unambiguous since the lack of visual contact makes it impossible to respond to the issue spontaneously;
- Ensure interactive learning;
- Organize prompt feedback, which is a critical component for creating an atmosphere of understanding and confidence among students;
- Maintain and increase motivation using various techniques;
- Divide the content into modules or blocks for more effective assimilation of educational material and a conscious approach to assimilation;
- Use audio content as a beneficial element (e.g., video lectures, webinars,
- workshops, etc.).

When using distance educational technologies, one should take into account the high degree of independence of students' work (Camilleri & Camilleri, 2017; Stankić, Jovanović-Gavrilović, & Soldić-Aleksić, 2018). Russian and international scholars emphasized that in the modern world, it is vital to understand that the level of presentation of the material plays a major role in learning (Miller, 2014; Nikirk, 2012; Stankić, Jovanović-Gavrilović, & Soldić-Aleksić, 2018; Stewart, 2009).

Distance learning has many advantages, but there are also problematic aspects, such as feedback and communication. There are many resources and elements for these purposes, but the primary aspect is to organize the communication process thoroughly, in our case, in a foreign language. The outcome of the course depends on the effectiveness of communication in distance learning.

The effectiveness of the educational process can depend on whether the conditions are comfortable in the learning environment, particularly in the process of distance learning. The comfort of the learning environment is crucial because learning issues are often associated with psychological issues, making it challenging to ensure a dialogue with the teacher and peers. This fact complicates meeting the requirements and affects the outcome and quality of education. The solution to this issue may imply the achievement of

comfort by students during the educational process as a condition and qualitative characteristics of their activities.

We agree with the scholars who consider the concept of "comfort" from the following angles:

- Psychological;
- Intellectual;
- Physical.

Let us dwell on each characteristic in more detail.

Psychological comfort is a state that arises in the process of a person's life, which indicates the joy, pleasure, and satisfaction experienced by students in an educational institution. These are living conditions where any person feels calm without a need to defend themselves from anyone (Tsabutashvili, Deinikina & Minikhanov, 2014). Besides, we put forward the following conditions for psychological comfort:

- Positive attitude to learning of all educational process participants;
- Open and sincere dialog between participants in the pedagogical process.

The concept of intellectual comfort includes the state of student satisfaction with their mental activity. At the same time, it is crucial to obtain results from the activity and feel the need to acquire new information.

According to scholars, physical comfort is the correspondence between a person's bodily, somatic needs and the subject-spatial conditions of the learning environment (Tsabutashvili et al., 2014).

The state of physical comfort provides a person with a feeling of joy for what they have done, creating positive motives for continuing the activity and leading to the individual growth of a person.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

In the research, we limited ourselves to studying the psychological comfort of students in the context of distance learning. In our opinion, psychological comfort is a crucial aspect of educational activities.

In this regard, we surveyed full-time students studying online for a semester. The survey was aimed at determining the level of tension during the process of distance learning. Tension is the opposite value of comfort: the higher the tension of students, the lower their comfort.

To conduct the survey, we used a test that determined the tension in the learning environment. The test was adapted to the target audience and the learning environment (distance learning).

In addition, we conducted a survey using the methodology of S. V. Levchenko. As a result, an emotional portrait of the general attitude to the organization of learning a foreign language within the framework of online university education was compiled. Therefore, the prevailing positive attitude is an essential factor in educational activity, affecting motivation and further success. The primary research goal is to determine the general psychological atmosphere among students during the process of distance learning for the subsequent building of relationships in this form.

To conduct the survey, we selected eight conditions from the most common ones in distance learning of a foreign language.

## RESULTS

The sample included 87 students, 26 men and 61 women aged 17–21 years (1–4 studying years). The survey presents two institutes: the Institute of Geography and the Institute of Chemistry and Chemical and Pharmaceutical Technologies.

Using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, we verified the normality of the sample distribution. The statistical error value was 0.2, corresponding to the normal distribution ($p > 0.05$).

Based on descriptive statistics, we analyzed the severity of the level of tension in the educational process and received the following results (see Table 1).

**TABLE 1**
**SEVERITY OF THE LEVEL OF TENSION**

| Level of tension | | Frequency | Valid percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1.00 (low) | 25 | 28.7 |
| | 2.00 (below average) | 22 | 25.3 |
| | 3.00 (average) | 26 | 29.9 |
| | 4.00 (above average) | 12 | 13.8 |
| | 5.00 (high) | 2 | 2.3 |
| | | | |

As a result of the survey based on the methodology of S. V. Levchenko, we obtained the following statistics (see Fig. 1).

**FIGURE 1**
**AN EMOTIONAL PORTRAIT OF PSYCHOLOGICAL ATTITUDE TO DISTANCE LEARNING (THE METHODOLOGY OF S. V. LEVCHENKO)**
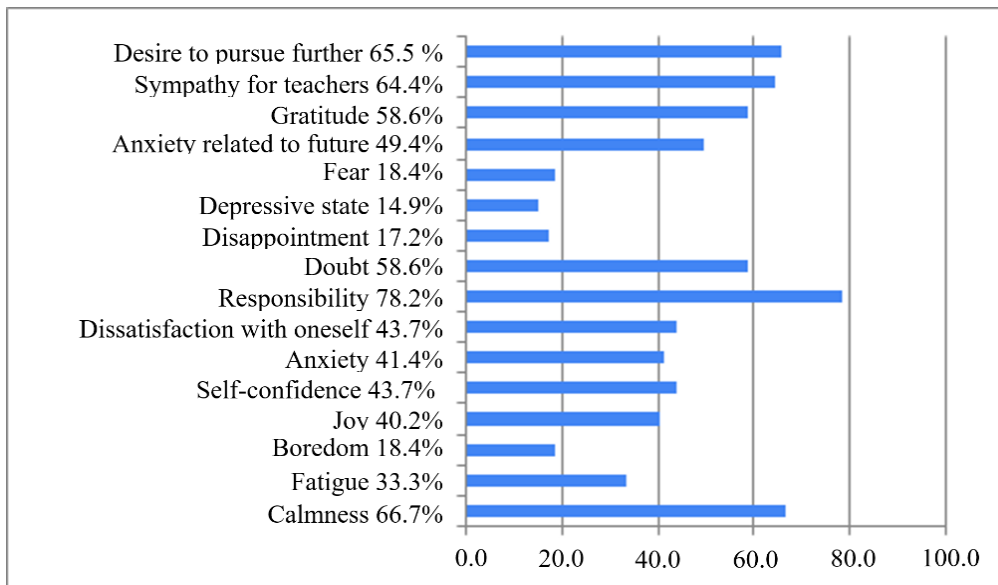


**DISCUSSION**

The analysis of the distribution of the results in Table 1 allows one to draw several conclusions. The most significant representative level is 3 (30%), which corresponds to the average level of tension in the educational process: a normal and comfortable psychological state in the learning process. An excessive calm state (1 low tension level) occurred in 29%, indicating a calm psychological state in the learning process. Very stressful, uncomfortable psychological level (5 high tension level) was characteristic of only 2% of respondents. The survey results show that students did not experience any psychological issues in distance learning. This fact may indicate that the educational conditions in the situations familiar to the student create a favorable atmosphere.

The second survey (Fig. 1) confirmed the results of the first survey. The least pronounced characteristics with which students associated distance learning are connected with a negative attitude: depressive state (15%), disappointment (17%), and fear (18%). The most pronounced were responsibility (78%), calmness (68%), and desire to pursue further (58%).

At the same time, to the question "Do you consider learning an online language in university education effective?", 52% of students answered, "Rather yes than no," and 48% answered, "Rather no than yes." This factor indicates that the new educational format has been cautiously adopted so far. Nonetheless, one can still experience positive emotions regarding distance learning.

Thus, the survey confirms that creating comfortable conditions in the learning process can reduce the gap between the information flow and the speed of learning the material (psychological calmness contributes to more effective perception). This fact is supported by the authors who emphasized the importance of presenting the material (Miller, 2014; Stankić, Jovanović-Gavrilović & Soldić-Aleksić, 2018; Stewart, 2009).

**CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the teacher's actions aimed at creating a healthy, psychologically comfortable environment are reduced to providing favorable conditions for the teacher-student interaction to ensure opportunities for the actualization of the personality of a student. In distance learning, it is essential to organize competent, prompt feedback to determine the psychological atmosphere since the success and effectiveness of the entire learning process may depend on it. For the organization of education, particularly language learning, in the online environment and the creation of comfortable psychological conditions, we suggested observing the following rules:

- Employing the quest in one's online work instead of pedagogical requirements;
- Using the methods of verbal persuasion to avoid aggressive verbal influence;
- Resorting to compromises when resolving controversial issues rather than confrontation;
- Organizing online classes, stating goals and objectives transparently;
- Ensuring prompt feedback from the teacher to minimize stress in the educational process;
- Applying emotional release methods in online classes (e.g., jokes, emoticons, funny pictures, sayings, aphorisms with comments, metaphors, short poems, or musical pieces).

Thus, the principle of psychological comfort can dominate because it assumes creating a favorable internal comfortable atmosphere for learning due to the removal of stress-forming factors. In addition, we presented one more quote that fully corresponds to our position, "in such an atmosphere of psychological comfort, students feel 'at home'"(Tsabutashvili et al., 2014). Education in fear, aggression, and authoritarianism will not lead to success but only suppress the student's personality. Psychological comfort is necessary for the personal development of students, their physical condition, and assimilation of knowledge.

Therefore, creating psychological comfort in the classroom leads to an increase in the efficiency of mastering the subject. Moreover, this principle is fundamental when organizing the learning process, in particular, when learning a foreign language. Following the above rules, the teacher creates comfortable conditions for the educational process, undoubtedly affecting the success and effectiveness of learning results, which is confirmed by the research data and many authors.

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