

Learning Management System

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Abstract

Distance learning entails a sort of industrialization of education. As in industrial production, it is necessary to share in the tasks, to carefully plan the results and the methods to be used, to craft the course contents and the means they will be inserted in, and to have a large number of students in mind. It involves a standardization of learning products, as if it were a process of massive production and distribution of learning. This: industrial side" of distance learning opens the way, we think, to a an increased inflexibility, which is really one of the basic features and appeals of this mode of teaching. This is a real paradox, if we think that learners often choose this kind of learning product because they need flexible ways to sharpen their skills without restrictions of place, time and so on and so forth.

Keywords: E-learning, management.

Introduction

Before we think about the virtual university should consider the fact that learning how a particular field to virtually done and whether it is possible that all the various academic disciplines into virtual taught and that students who are studying this way of scientific information and what level of difference with the order students will. If we believe that we can remotely without having to attend in one place and communicate closely with the teacher, learn something, this time we will find that we can establish a virtual university. A virtual university is a base fact that all courses and training programs available through the internet virtual world will be presented to students. This requirement will be that students in traditional classrooms to be present if all the training will be done remotely.

The most important tool for creating this database is needed, the internet and web related technologies that bridge between students and professors will become. You attend a virtual university or place any time limit and will not need to choose their courses each semester in hurry and you're scared of the classes have filled. Thus the number of courses and disciplines offered and restrictions will have very few can master many of the students range covered. Some years the educational practices in our the world of course lessons and many academic disciplines as virtual internet and to provide for diversity in many education system and education have created.

Some Histories Background on Distance Learning

In Ancient times distances certainly seemed greater and more difficult to surmount that are today. The seekers of knowledge had to travel to the source in order to get it or, like the travelling rhetoricians and old sophists of the classic world who walked far and wide around Greece talking their *vis persuadendi* (skill or faculty of persuading) to villages and cities. Instructing students here and there for a fee, the source would come to them. The distance was then bridged by the teacher himself or, more often, by the student. Letters written by the wise and distributed slowly through the land to reach their destination and their readers' hands were also the earliest instances of distance teaching. The Egyptians and the Summerians did use the letters as mean of personal instruction and so did the Greeks to a great extent.

The experts in distance education tend to sequence the various stages of the history of this teaching method by closely following the phases of development undergone by the means used therein. Hence, the means used to fill the separation existing between learner and teacher determine to a great extent the arrangement and study of the history of distance education. For practical reasons, we have followed here historical phases identified by Lorenzo Garcia Aretio, who at present holds the UNESCO chair of Distance and open Education at the UNED (Spanish university of Distance Education), in his newly-published manual on the subject(Garcia Aretio 2010):

A. Correspondence Teaching

Laying aside the earliest examples of instructive correspondence of ancient and classical civilizations and later periods, the first known instance of a teaching correspondence course in the west dates back to 1723. when a Mr. Caleb Philips, professor of short hand ,Published a advertisement in the Boston Gazatte offering teaching materials and tutorials. He offered to teach his 'art' to all who so desired in the Boston region. Some years later there is another example recorded in a Swedish newspaper, the lunds weckoblad. A Mr. A.J. Meuller published a reminder to his composition students that the course address for the month of August would be little Gray Friars Street.

However, the first testimony of an organized correspondence course in which there was bidirectional communication comes from England, in 1840, when Issac Pitman initiated a short hand course, where in he sent a passage of the Bible to students and these would sent it back In full transcription. The success of the course resulted in the foundation of the *phonographic correspondence society* in 1843. Which later developed into the *sir Issac pitman correspondence colleges?*

As a further instance we may recall the pioneering milestone in distance language teaching laid in 1856 by charls Toussiant and Gastav Langenscheidt, Who started up the first European institution of distance learning. The institute Toussaint et Langenscheidt in Germany. This is the first known instance of the use materials for independent language study. From those early stages, correspondence institutions appeared in the United States and other European countries.

This stage was triggered and fostered by the development in 1680 of the famous penny post service, which allowed the delivery of letters and parcels and parcels for a penny. Note that the first trace of correspondence teaching that of Caleb Phillips appears some ten years after 1680. we see the means characterizing the teaching method once again.

B. Multimedia teaching

Here the term "Multimedia" refers to the use of several means (media) to reach the students and provide instruction. According to Aretio, this stage is a product of the 1960s, especially around the key year 1969, when the British *Open University* was founded (see Aretio, 2010:50). Printed materials are joined by audiotapes, videotapes, radio and TV, broadcasts, telephone, etc. In this stage the theorists of distance education focused their attention in the design and production of teaching materials and the interaction between learners and teachers took on a secondary role.

C. Telematic teaching

Aretio dates the beginning of this *third generation* of distance in the 1980s. This decade marks the arrival of modern telecommunications in the education scene. Computers increasingly became an every day tool reaching more homes and institutions of higher learning. Computer aided teaching was the great development and integration was the key word: integration of technical and educational means and instruments. These are some of the features of the period:

Integration of media

Student-centred education

Synchronous (real time) communication between learner and teacher.

A Synchronous (differed) communication is also possible.

Multimedia systems (hypertexts, i.e., materials used)

D. Teaching through the internet

This stage has received several names: fourth generation distance teaching, virtual campus, virtual teaching, flexible learning model, etc. It is the internet age. The World Wide Web reveals itself as the great breakthrough. Teachers and learners can communicate faster and even *in real time*. But, as Aretio points out, the most important contribution of the arrival of the internet has been the surmounting of one of the traditional obstacles of distance learning: the lack of two-way interaction or bidirectional communication. In traditional correspondence teaching, teachers had a hard time obtaining feedback from their students, quickly, promptly and directly. The internet has made a real communication flow in the teaching/ learning process finally possible and has allowed teachers and learners to go a few steps further.

In this vein, some authors are foreseeing the beginning of a fifth generation teaching or education (see Taylor, 1999 and Ogata y yano, 1997, quoted in Aretio, 2010:52). This future model has been referred to as the flexible intelligent learning generation, in which the computer would take the place of the teachers as tutors and mentor of distance learns and a completely automated response system. Thus, it would be possible to cut down costs for staff and faculty. Finally, it is still to be seen what have to offer the WAP and UMTS technologies integrated in the wireless internet and mobile phones for distance leaning, once current limitations and challenges are overcome.

There is a side effect of the Internet era, linked to a standardization of teaching units. With the ever -increasing use of Web sites for housing course contents, lessons, teaching units, etc. There has been a massive development in education software platforms. There are so many of them out there that any teaching institution or company will have a hard time ascertaining which package suits their needs. Some companies provide institutions with full e-learning solutions, that is, they develop customized platforms and insert the course contents and take charge of administering and catering for the whole system. Some see in this a damaging taking away of education control from universities and a dangerous concept of education merely as business and profit. Institutions of higher learning enter into agreements with internet providers and e-learning software providers to gain access to the profitable new market of distance web –based education. Be that as it may, times may be changing and keeping up with new developments is a must, even for universities. It is important to note that these phases aren't closed, hermetic, stages. As Aretio points out : "many distance teaching programmers have not as yet gone beyond the first stage [that of correspondence teaching]. In any event, many of those programmers clearly fall in the third stage; however, they still make use of pointed materials, that is the main media of the first period" (Aretio, 2010: 54).

Exploring the key terms and concepts of distance learning

Defining the terms

As in many other disciplines, terminological issues are a real challenge for any newcomers to the field of distance learning. There is a wide variety of terms used to refer to the same concepts and there seems to be a lake of consensus as to the basic ways of designating the main concepts of the discipline. For the purpose of this paper, it is important to review what is and what is not distance learning, what is web –based training, What is e-learning, etc. These definitions will be the criteria that have been followed in the survey of several translator- training institutions in order to ascertain the state of the art in distance translation learning programmers currently available with an emphasis on the use of the internet to offer translation courses.

Distance versus open learning

These two terms have been traditionally connected in the works of the experts in the field. Open learning is very vague term indeed. For some authors it has to do with those educational systems or programmes that are free of classroom constraints (Aretio, 2010:13). For others, the key distinction of this kind of education is nothing but the lake of formal requirements for admission of students into the teaching programmers, as opposed to "close teaching or learning", where students must comply with certain requisites in order to start taking a course. Thus, the following items could be listed as the main features of so-called open learning:

- No requirements are to be met by prospective students and enrolment is open to all.
- There is no university campus as such: there are no constrains of space (Learning and teaching does not take place in just one location).
- The means used to teach are varied and open or free.
- Students are free to choose the competencies and skills desire to acquire in the teaching process.
- The teaching/learning process is more flexible than that of other teaching methods. (Aretio,2010:15-16)

On the other hand, we have the term "distance learning". The catalogue of terms used to refer to this method of teaching is quite astonishing. There are many synonyms and all of the emphasize one or two different aspects of the concept: thus we have *independent study*, a more popular term in the American setting, whereby it is the chance students have to decide when, how and what to learn is stressed; *industrial from of instruction*, a term that focuses on the planning and development process of distance learning, where there is a division of all the tasks involved and team management thereof, very similar to industrial production methods; *home study*, the term is very self-explanatory, indicating as the main feature that the learning process tasks place not in traditional classrooms, but in the student's house.

Another term widely used in the United States is *correspondence education*. Here students learn by reading; the focus is on printed materials and mail communication. The term *distance learning* has taken the place of this term as time and the means used for communication have evolved toward information technologies. This terminological forest is more and more complex when the terms used the different traditional held in different countries are added to the list.

However, let us focus on the key features of distance learning so as to come up with a concrete definition containing the leading criteria to create our report on the current situation of distance translation teaching. Many are the definitions that have been put forward for the term distance learning. We consider Garcia Aretio's integrated approach towards defining the term quite interesting. In his manual on the subject, he analyzes some 18 definitions of distance learning and tries to summarize them into one all encompassing definition: "Distance education is based upon a didactic mediated dialogue between a teacher (learning institution) and students, who are located in a different place as regards the teachers' location and who learn in an independent (collaborative) way" (Aretio 2010:41). These are then the key ingredients of distance learning:

- There is separation between teacher and learner both in time and in space (though new technologies available now are calling for a redefinition of concepts such as "distance" and "time").
- There are, between teachers and learners, several technical or didactic means. Communication between them is always "mediated".
- There is tutorial organization or a support system that is more complex than those set up in programmes used in residential courses.
- Learners learn independently and in a flexible way. They choose the time, place and pace of study.
- There is a bidirectional or two-way communication with feedback between teacher and learner. For some authors. This feature, the so-called "guided didactic dialogue", is the key to distance learning.
- In distance learning more than any other teaching method, the technological side is essential, since it relies heavily on the means used to bridge the gap between teacher and students.
- Mass communication, i.e., teaching units are customized in such a way that course contents can be offered to anyone, any where, anytime and through technological means that make possible to reach massive numbers of people across time and space. Communication is vertical, as it where, that is, it flows between teacher and learner. but also horizontal, i.e., between students taking the same course. Distance learning is an ideal setting for collaborative or cooperative learning.

All in all, and leaving aside all the features of distance education that make up its integrated definition, we agree with Aretio's list of features of that is not distance learning:

- Programmes that require a high degree of physical presence on the part of students in the institution's facilities.
- Programmes where the teaching and learning activities take place in the same location, even at different times, requiring students to travel.
- Programmes where independent and autonomous study is not possible. Students are subject to restrictions in terms of time study, place of study and pace of study.
- Programmes where the only communication existing between teacher and students is that of face-to-face interviews.
- Programmes where communication is just one-way and there is no feedback from students (Aretio, 2010:41)

Hence we see distance education as a teaching method in which: students are not required to travel to an institution in order to get taught and where communication between teacher and learners is carried out through certain means (email, videoconference, printed materials, letters, etc) as opposed to direct face to face contact.

Online learning versus Web-based learning

E- Learning could be well defined as the space where education and IT meet (see E- Learning, *The partnership Challenge*, OECD, 2001:9). It is a virtual area where courses are offered, students and teachers meet by means of electronic media, and, ideally at least, experts in education and experts in Information Technologies unite their forces in order to design effective learning products, usually distributed by the internet (see Duarte and Sangra 2000: 9-10)

Our main focus here is the learning and teaching carried through the Internet channel, both as a means of communication and as a sort of virtual class room or virtual campus, or virtual university if you will, not only useful for communication but also as a place for content storage. For the purposes of this article it is important to distinguish between *Web –based* or *Web-enhanced* courses, learning or teaching, and online courses, teaching and learning. This distinction may seem artificial but a survey of the current state of affairs in e-learning, many institutions seem to be using this same classification.

IT has proven a useful tool for teachers who teach from afar and for those who teach face-to-face. Thus, many universities are setting up virtual campuses and virtual classroom as a support system for their residential or face-to-face courses. They use mailing lists, Chat platforms and several other tools to help teachers and students meet each other after university hours, exchange work assignments, views and comments, etc. According to the criteria we have here borrowed from Garcia Aretio, these uses of the internet and computers for educational or teaching purposes aren't distance learning.

The focus of our survey is distance learning carried out through the internet or distance e-learning. One such instance of a virtual translation classroom or *Web-enhanced learning* programmers is that of the university of Malaga, in Spain (<http://www.ieev.uma.es/campus/humanid/gcorpas/proyaul/index.htm>), among others, where teachers of translation and their students are able to meet, exchange information, storage translations to create corpora, etc (see corpora poster et al.,2000). These kinds of projects are useful but entail the use of the internet as an aid to the learning and teaching process: for obvious reasons, they do not constitute distance learning programmers as such and haven't been included in our survey. In Web –based or Web-enhanced programmers, students still are required to take face-to-face classes, meet with teachers, be institution-bound, etc.

Conversely, we have the so-called *online teaching, online learning and online courses*. Here, entire courses are designed, implemented, taught on the web and from a distance. The same applies to the teaching, testing and assessment process. This is where distance learning and e-learning meet and here is where there is place for full integration of IT and pedagogy. This mode of teaching entails new theoretical concepts, innovative but sound pedagogical principles, education to virtual space and technical means. It is a teaching method where "motivation" becomes the main guiding principle and a real axis for the whole process, together with collaboration between learners (see Duart and Sangra, 2000).

Learning management system (LMS) and learning content management system (LCMS) Main article: Learning management system

A Learning management system (LMS) is software used for delivering, tracking and managing training/education. LMSs range from systems for managing training/educational records to software for distributing courses over the Internet and offering features for online collaboration.

A Learning content management system (LCMS) is software for authoring, editing and indexing e-learning content (courses, reusable content object). An LCMS may be solely dedicated to producing and publishing content that is hosted on an LMS or it can host the content itself. The Aviation Industry Computer-Based Training Committee (AICC) specification provides support for content that is hosted separately from the LMS.

A LMS allows for teachers and administrators to track attendance, time on task, and student progress. LMS also allows for not only teachers and administrators to track these variables but parents and students as well. Parents can log on to the LMS to track grades. Students log on to the LMS to submit homework and to access the course syllabus and lessons.

Profile of Learners (Learners Manager)

Training and electronic learning systems, whether for presenting personal and customized services or only for storage of information such as the learners progress and current status of individual learners should be called information about individual learners profile and manage other users. Standards for representation and management information model by which individual learners user modeling techniques are there, there.

Among these stars can be standardized (PAPI) public and private information by the committee IEEE LTSC institute been prepared as mentioned in the same relation to IMS activities have recently modeled the standard PAPI standard as the LMS learner information packaging presented to the PAPI standard has some advantages.

Meanwhile, the consortium as a standard IMS Enterprise specification describes the characteristics of a group of people deals. However, IMS is planning two standards in the near future combine and provide a template. In addition to the above standards, standards like school interoperability framework, SPEEDE/ Express, vCard, as well as parts of Human Resource Staffing protocols such as HR-XML to describe the profile management and learners are available.

Conclusion

There is a lot to do and this field appears wide open to researchers and institutions. As agreements between the private sector enterprises (such as internet access providers, software programmers) and the academic setting are entered into, and as the credibility of education provided through the internet becomes more and more widespread, the online teaching of translators will inevitably work its way into translator –training institutions. Increasingly, it will become a viable alternative and not a substitute for traditional and resident programmers. However, several obstacles need to be surmounted. Among others:

- 1) Equal value and status of certificates and degrees attained by students needs to be consolidated. If an undergraduate student desires to be a qualified translator he or she will tend to choose residential full-length courses. For the time being, most programmers offered through the Web are just certificates, short courses. They tend to serve needs of postgraduate students and further or continuing education, purposes. There should be a way of offering full length BAs or MAs on Translation, equal in both academic and professional status and recognition in the market. The problems and challenges of this point are still to be ascertained
- 2) Many of the online programmers currently offered are carried out on a trial and error basis. This may work out in the here and now, and as long as students needs are met. However, solid, quality long-term distance and online programmers call for solid theoretical and methodological foundations, for the design of course contents, implementation and didactic materials, evaluation of student, teaching techniques, technological resources, etc. (Aretio 2010).
- 3) As far as technology is concerned, there are challenges and pitfalls. This is a teaching method that relies heavily on the means used, as we have seen above. The internet, it and many technological breakthroughs will pave the way for the broadening of possibilities and new prospects. On the other hand, course administrators, teachers and educators in general must be reminded of the dangers inherent in any teaching method being too resource-centered. In this vein, Derek Morrison (director at the centre for the development of new technologies in Learning at the Division of Access and Continuing Studies of the University of Bath) offers a **very relevant**

Warning

E-learning is no panacea. A bad learning experience is a bad learning experience no matter how it is experienced... and inappropriately applied technology can provide you with the means to deliver a bad learning experience to lots more people over greater distances.

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