MANAGEMENT OF STUDENTS' INDIVIDUAL WORK UNDER THE DISTANCE LEARNING CONDITIONS

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Abstract: The quick development of information and communication technologies opens prospects in the field of education for the management of students' individual work, including also extramural education. The article shows importance of students' individual work from the perspective of transformation to European educational standards, necessity for modernization of such most important part of lifelong learning as traditional extramural education in Ukraine, problems with management of students' individual work under the conditions of extramural education and solving them by transformation to distance learning; the individual management work model under the distance learning conditions implemented in National Pedagogical Dragomanov University.

Keywords: extramural education, organization of distance learning, management of individual work of students, information and communication technologies.

INTRODUCTION

The fast changing high-tech society needs graduates who are prepared for lifelong self-education and organization of their own learning, in particular with the use of time management and management of resources for learning. Alumni are expected to determine problems on their own and solve these problems by means of critical and flexible thinking.

The concept of lifelong learning recommended by the European Parliament and the Council of the European Union (Recommendation of the European Parliament 2006) provides for all specialists formation of 8 key competencies, among which is "learning to learn". Bucharest Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education (2012) ststes that higher education must be an open process and students should develop their own knowledge-based independence, form self-confidence and ability to assess the situation at that time critically giving reasons for own activities.

Results of sociological research of the international project TUNING ("Tuning Educational Structures in Europe") also confirm the fact of importance of individual work of students. According to this, one of the most significant competencies (in the opinion of graduates, employers and professors) is "ability to learn" (rank 2, 1 and 3 respectively). The group of graduates and employers has also regarded such competencies as "ability to perform individual work" and "ability to organize and plan" which can be really important for individual work (Gonzales, Wagenaar 2003).

Therefore, attention is being increasingly focused on the activity of universities related to creation of conditions for management of students' individual work, because it is this work what encourages development of independence and ability to pursue creative self-development and self-education (by forming the competence "ability to learn").

However, implementation of pedagogical innovations of student-centered educational surrounding should be with the use of modern information and communication technologies, because pedagogical innovations need to be one of the priorities of education development in the nearest future (Communiqué Yerevan 2015).

Thus, modern education should be aimed at the development of flexibility, individual cognitive activity, service extension and high technological effectiveness. All this characterizes distance learning process. Research related to investigating the effectiveness of new forms, methods, technologies and distance learning methodologies has become more up-to-date and valid. Use of the distance learning helps to solve problems with students' learning activities, organization of the learning process, and application of didactic potential of information and communication technologies for the organization of the teaching and learning process.

Priority areas of research in the field of distance education scientists note such as: instructional and communications technology; role of distance education in national development; student support services; evaluation; equity and access; design and development of study materials; interactive multimedia. There is a shift from technology-centered research to areas that focus on management and change in distance education institutions. The emergence of online distance learning highlights a pressing need for educational institutions to embrace innovation and change. It can be concluded that all aspects related to educational management are growing in importance (Zawacki-Richter 2009).

On the other hand, distance learning technologies open wide access to different educational services for a great number of people who cannot get education due to the use of traditional methods. Absence of "age limit" is also one of the most important facts about the use of distance learning technologies, because sometimes such an "age limit" can be a real problem for retraining people with the professional experience. Also access to this education is a big plus for disabled people.

1. STATISTICS RELATED TO GETTING HIGHER EDUCATION BY STUDENTS IN UKRAINE

Until now most students in Ukraine have preferred full-time education. This shows established social values and a place of higher education in professional and personal human development, and assessment of the impact of its quality on career prospects. Generally, the dynamics of changes of the contingent of university students in Ukraine correlates with the demographic situation. There has been a decrease in the total number of students over the last 20 years (Figure 1a).

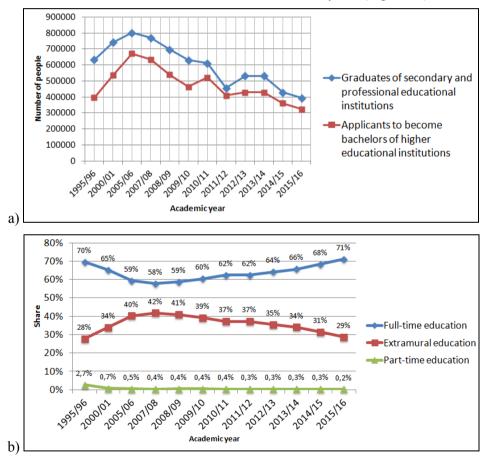


Figure 1. a) The change in the number of applicants to become bachelors and graduates of secondary schools in Ukraine; b) The distribution of the share of students of different education forms depending on the academic year

Analysis of full-time, extramural and part-time education in Ukraine allows for making the following conclusion. Extramural education is getting smaller than its full-time type. In addition to this, part-time education is practically "disappearing" as a result of non-standard working hours dominating among young employees. Figure 1b with the data of State Statistics Service of Ukraine (Publication of State Statistics Service of Ukraine 2011-2016) shows that there have been two opposite trends concerning the dynamics of the number of students getting extramural education during the last 20 years. Initially (till 2007/2008) there was a faster growth from 427414 to 1175782 (+175%), and then a sharp continuing decrease to 46015 (-61%). The dynamics of changes in the number of students getting extramural education in both of these periods was considerably higher than the similar indicator for full-time education (the increase of 52% and then the decrease of -30%) in general. The first trend was caused by transformation to mass higher education and the desire of people (who have graduated school 5-20 years ago) to get high education and compete in the labor market. The second trend can coincide with the significant increase in the proportion of people with higher education in the age group 20-40 years, consequences of the demographic and economic crisis, and also the implementation of external independent testing (from 2008 obligatory for people, except for those who received secondary education in 2007 and earlier, from 2015 – obligatory for almost all categories of people) which that could complicate preparation of young employees for admission to universities (Finikov, Sharov 2014).

Besides, a rather high ratio of expelling (for such reasons as academic failure, failure of contracts, necessity to interrupt education because of giving birth to a child, family circumstances, being called up for military service, long business trips, temporary unemployment, disease and so on) is characteristic of students getting extramural education. In addition to this, graduation of extramural students often exceeds the volume of enrolment at this form of education because of the migration of full-time students. However, preparation of extramural students in Ukraine is characterized by a rather low level.

Now the problem related to increasing the quality of such an important part of lifelong learning as extramural education is especially urgent and indicates the need for modernization, which involves the use of new pedagogical, information and communication technologies and distance learning. Such improvements may have a positive impact on the availability of this type of education as well as the employability and competitiveness of its graduates according to their specialty.

2. PECULARITIES OF EXTRAMURAL EDUCATION

The extramural form of education has been recognized in all countries throughout the world as one of the most significant directions of integrating education with manufacturing. It becomes the most important component of the lifelong education system (Callender, Little 2015). The structure of extramural education includes guiding session, intersessional stage of unmanageable individual work and educational examination session during which it is rather difficult to control and teach because of the lack of time. Besides that individual work of students is the main form of work in extramural education (85% of the time for a particular educational discipline).

Thus, the essential element of extramural education in universities is a focus on individual work with students. In addition to this, individual work should have specific characteristics. This work needs to be controlled and assessed, but it is difficult to do this, especially under conditions of territorial remoteness of extramural education process participants.

We distinguish the following peculiarities of extramural education:

- 1. Minimum of contacts with the teacher (no more than 2 times per year)
- 2. Individual character of educational activity
- 3. Combination with work
- 4. Territorial remoteness of the educational process participants

Taking into account the peculiarities of extramural education, it is possible to determine the problems and contradictions in the process of management of individual work of students:

- 1. Modularity and crediting of training material, which is one of ECTS principles. Credits are placed per all educational components of the training program (such as modules, courses, etc.) and reflect the quantity of working hours required for each component to achieve certain goals. Extramural students, as a rule, are studying only during educational examination sessions, when it is difficult to objectively check the received knowledge of modules or credits and apply the rating scale (ECTS (A-FX)).
- 2. Individual work of extramural students is the main form of educational process organization. In order to estimate the quality level of the individual work, systematical control of teachers is needed, but it is difficulty to do under the conditions of territorial remoteness of educational process participants.
- 3. It is assumed that educational discipline in the intersessional stage should have a systematic character, but very often it does not happen in reality. Current and final works are performed at the last moment. This can be because of such different reasons as lack of willingness to time management and lack of permanent control. It means that an extramural student has some freedom of choice in respect of time for learning, but he (or she) is not always able to properly distribute this time due to their work or family.
- 4. Lack of systematical contact with the teacher in the intersessinal stage does not allow for students' gaining knowledge necessary in the field of study and performing individual work. Students very often have questions not at the stage

of the guiding session, but just in the process of working on their assignments and preparing for fnal tests. Lack of feedback control in the intersessional stage does not allow for effective educational management. Extramural students note that it could be better to meet with the teacher, because of difficulties in getting certain educational discipline knowledge due to the lack of individual activity experience.

Therefore, the problems mentioned above relate to the management of extramural individual work of students. These problems make it impossible to form a proper competence level of future specialists and provide education access to a different contingent of students.

3. MANAGEMENT OF INDIVIDUAL WORK OF STUDENTS UNDER THE DISTANCE LEARNING CONDITIONS

The quick development of information and communication technologies opens prospects in the field of education for the management of students' individual work, including also extramural education.

Some universities (with extramural education form) implement modern achievements in information and communication technologies in order to make individual work of students really possible. This trend is also observed in postgraduate education. Thus, the intersessional period for extramural students practically relates to distance management of individual work of students.

The management technology is a set of methods, tools and techniques used to perform the management cycle, i.e., for the purpose of managing certain processes, including cognitive activity lasting from establishing management goals to achieving them. In the context of educational administration, the management cycle is a sequence of actions aimed at solving specific educational issues and provides their consistent performance until the management process goal is reached.

In order to solve problems with effective management of individual work of students, it is necessary to use innovative pedagogical technologies and all stages of the educational management cycle (Figure 2): planning, motivation, organization, control, regulation, using distance learning technologies at all stages. This will allow students to have access to the learning environment, communications, control and self-control at any time and in any place where there is possibility of connecting to the Internet (Vakulenko 2016). Indeed, the efficiency of educational management will increase only if all functions in the management cycle system integratedly operate. The management process assumes that the results of one activity should be considered in the implementation of other management functions and the management cycle in general.

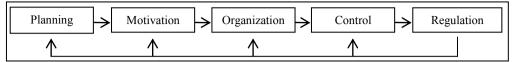


Figure 2. Functions of pedagogical management of individual work of students

Generally, more than 130 universities in Ukraine to some extent implement elements of distance learning technologies for extramural students. Now it is possible to get higher education by distance learning only in 7-10 Ukrainian universities which have the permit of the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine for pedagogical experiments in distance learning. Among these universities, there is National Pedagogical Dragomanov University (Kyiv, Ukraine, hereafter – M. Dragomanov NPU), which provides distance learning educational services (Andruschenko 2011).

3.1. Planning of students' individual work

The Ukrainian legal area does not have appropriate regulative basis for practical innovation technologies implementation. Due to this, the M.Dragomnov NPU was develeloping its own practice during 2004-2009. The practice was properly approved according to the Ukrainian legislation (see Table 1) (Andruschenko 2011). The e-learning form has undergone an additional development (since 2013) after the approval of "Regulation on distance learning" (25.04.2013) by the Ministry of Education and Science of Ukraine. This has considerably liberalized its implementation and organization.

Table 1.

Document	Content
"Concept of distance learning development in the M.Dragomnov NPU"	Main trends in the implementation of distance learning technologies in the university activity
"Regulation on distance learning in the M.Dragomnov NPU"	Principles of organization of distance learning in the university
"Regulation on recognizing distance learning resources and their elements as educational and methodological works"	Determining of information distance learning resources, mechanism of expertise conduction, order of equating to educational and methodological works
"Regulation on the local distance learning center"	Functions and management of local distance learning centers
"Regulation on preparation of educational and methodological materials for distance learning"	Mechanism of preparation, payments and responsibility

Regulatory Basis

Document	Content
"Regulation on the use of distance learning	Structure, functions and responsibilities
technologies for extramural and distance	of all parties of educational process, time
education in the M.Dragomnov NPU"	and accounting standards

The introduction of distance learning technologies in the educational process requires creating of an effective high-tech infrastructure. The infrastructure of distance education includes a wide variety of different elements. Besides that, the central element is a distance learning system, which helps solve the main problems arising from the using distance learning technologies.

The distance learning system "Celsi" (Center of E-learning System Implementation) in the M.Dragomnov NPU consists of three modules (Figure 3): education management system LMS "Moodle" (Modular Object Oriented Distance Learning Environment), electronic document flow system "Deanery" and message exchange system "E-mail" (<u>http://celsi.npu.edu.ua</u>). The modules such as "Deanery" and "E-mail" are made on the basis of Microsoft software (Windows SharePoint Services and Outlook Web App respectively).



Figure 3. Distance learning system of the M.Dragomnov NPU

On the basis of educational plans the M.Dragomnov NPU develops plans which take into account the specificity of distance learning in compliance with the credittransferring system. The number of credits and the number of module tests are included to the structure of the plans with indicating of the implementation schedule (once a month). Educational disciplines that need the examination control and the disciplines with laboratory classes (without support of virtual laboratory practices) are concentrated mainly in the even semesters. It is possible to optimize distance learning activities of teachers and students. So, the presence of the student in the local distance learning center (which is located near the residence of the student) at least once a month is required, but this may vary.

In order to support the educational process with using of distance learning technologies, the M.Dragomnov NPU has created full educational and methodological provision (200 distance learning courses) for two bachelor programmes ("Biology" and "Elementary Education") and master programmes ("High Educational Institutions Management" and "Administrative Management"). Now, there are three opened local centers for distance learning (Lubny in Poltava region, Dobromyl in Lviv region, Yevpatoriya in the Crimea). For the first time in 2010, the university implemented a set of students for extramural-distance learning. The certification of distance learning teachers (for conducting courses with the use of distance learning technologies) has been realized (Analytical Report of the M.Dragomnov NPU 2016).

The roles of tutors, ie, roles of pedagogical, managerial, social and technical work (classification made by L. Berge) with students in the learning process carried by methodists. The teaching staff was preparing educational materials for creating e-learning courses, preparing and conducting virtual classes, counseling, determining current and final evaluations. A teacher in distance education called distance learning teachers or online teacher. This is done to emphasize reliance of the new features associated with the use of network technology training on distance education teacher and also to not to be confused with the methodist teacher (assistant in distance learning, tutor). Thus, remote teacher and tutor depending on distance learning educational model can be a continuation of the traditional figures of the education system as a teacher and methodist (Kudin, Vakulenko 2009).

Online tutors do play an important role in supporting e-learning delivery. This is especially important for part-time students that apparently rently don't get sufficient support from traditional learning. Only well-trained tutors will be able to satisfy student expectation about the quantity, frequency and quality of learning supporting activities (Sulčič 2007).

The use of distance learning technologies allows providing of the educational disciplines modularity assumed by working programmes, including organization of a large volume of individual work, clear structuring of educational material, full methodological support of educational disciplines, and the appropriate system (ECTS rating scale).

3.2. Organization of students' individual work

The clear structuring of distance learning courses assumed by educational plans and the number of module controls allow for planning of the convenient material learning, namely creating a training path, similar to the schedule, which is a kind of weekly online organizer or navigation of the student activity in each semester. Figure 4 shows a fragment of the schedule, where the possible number of points is indicated. These points can be obtained by timely completion of all the learning tasks. It develops the students' ability to use their time more rationally; especially it is good for students who have insufficient skills of the individual planning and organizing of their training. In fact, all distance courses are developed by step-bystep learning instructions. Achievement of the goals is formulated in their description. Of course, the student can choose an individual and convenient learning way.

All activities noted in the schedule (except for examinations, certifying examination and some laboratory classes) are performed with the use of the distance learning system of the M.Dragomnov NPU.

×		Histology and principles of embryology		Pedology			Coursework	
Week	Date	M.M. Grusha, Senior prof., Ph.D. (Biology)	, ti	I.B.Chomyj, Associate prof., Ph.D. (Biology)	Points		A.Y.Diduch, O.V.Yeropudova, S.A.Mirosznychenko, O.O.Romanovskyj, O.M.Czyzhevska, M.H.Szevtsov	Points
1	07.02.15 - 13.02.15	Test #1	3	I heoretical material				
2	14.02.15 - 20.02.15	Individual work #1 Theoretical material Test #2	3	Theoretical material Test #1	5		Writing of the plan and introduction	10
5	07.03.15 - 13.03.15	Theoretical material Lab #1 Module test #1	5 10	Theoretical material Lab №2	15			
6	14.03.15 - 20.03.15	theoretical material Test #7 Consultation lecture #3	3	Theoretical material Test #3	5		Writing of Section I	15
•••								
10	11.04.15 - 17.04.15	Module test #2	10	Theoretical material Test #5 Module test #1	5 20			
16	23.05.15 - 29.05.15	Test #15 Consultation lecture #6	3	Consultation lecture #4	2		Writing of conclusions	10
17	30.05.15 - 05.06.15	Module test #3	10	Module test #2 consultation №5	15 2		Writing of references	5
18	06.06.15 - 12.06.15			TESTWEE	ΞK		1	
Numb	er of points of current							
	control		70		100			70
19	13.06.15 - 19.06.15			SESSIO	N			
		ab #4 15						
		EXAMINATION	15	FINAL TEST	100		THESIS DEFENSE	30
	Number of points of final control	Number of points of current control for VI semester + number of examination points	100	Number of points of current control for VI semester	100		Number of points of current control for the semester + number of points of thesis defense	100
20-30	20.06.15 - 31.08.15 VACATION							

Figure 4. Fragment of the schedule of students for extramural-distance learning of the M.Dragomnov NPU

Figure 5 shows the scheme of organization of extramural students' work at the M.Dragomnov NPU with the use of a distance learning system.

3.3. Motivation, control and regulation of individual work of students

Special attention in the system of management of individual work of students under the distance learning conditions is paid to the motivation mechanism which should be not only a progress indicator, but also one of the methods of meeting the increasing requirements in getting qualitatively new knowledge. It is especially related to assessment of the conformity of results obtained in the learning process with the goals. The main motivational component is the combination of synchronous (chat and web-conference) and asynchronous (E-mail, forum and blog) modes and means of communication during consultations, allowing to enrich the learning process, while retaining the flexibility and convenience by expanding the quality and efficiency of both modes (Vakulenko 2010).

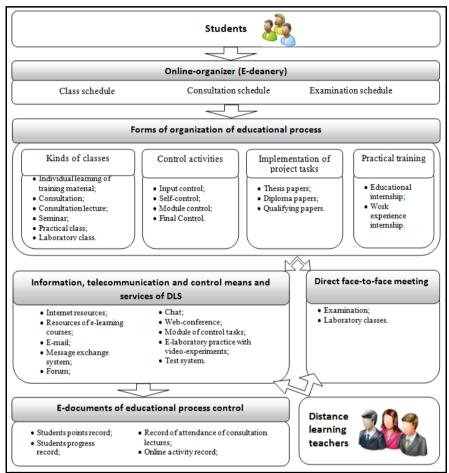


Figure 5. Scheme of organization of students' work for extramural-distance learning in the M.Dragomnov NPU

Owing to systematic feedback of students with teachers through information, telecommunication and control services and means of distance learning system, it is possible to systematically control the level of obtaining training material and make easier learning activity assessment under the conditions of the significant volume of the individual work, individualize and differentiate the learning process. The distance teacher (depending on the success of the student) may apply flexible, individual training technique, and offer units of training materials (additional and more targeted to the specific student), links to information resources that allows for providing the possibility of qualitative students' training. Also, there is an option of

monitoring of students' online activity, and with the help of this, analyze the reasons for its decreasing and eliminate them.

In order to perform control functions and implement the learning process, the webapplication "E-document flow system Dean's-Point" (included in the module "Deanery") has been developed. One of its functions is to work with databases of SQL Server 2005 system Moodle and generating (in the convenient form for distance teachers and trainers of e-records). Among these records, there are *students points record* (with the results of current and final control for each educational discipline, see Figure 6), *students progress record* (an analog of a matriculation book), *record of attendance of consultation lectures* (with dates, time and duration of consultation classes, the teachers' name and surname), and *online activity record*.

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Ne	Student	Module test #1. Points/15	Module test #2. Points/15	Module test #3. Points/15	Module test #4. Points/15	Practical work #1. Points/10	Practical work #2. Points/10	Individual work #1 Points/8	Individual work #1 Points/8	Consultation lecture #1 (01.10.2015; Thursday; 17:00-18:20)	Consultation lecture #2 (30.10.2015; Friday; 17:00-18:20)	Number of points of final control	EC
	Borysovets Katervna	11.91	7.32	6.65	7.65	7	9	8	8	Points/2	Points/2	70	
2	Honchareenko		6,68	7,12	8,45	7	9	8	8	2	2	65	1
11	T		onic flov	w of doo	cument	S	150	A	n 's	-	Use	r; vakulenkoiv	_
Hor			_	Records	-	•	Forms	-	•	Course	•	Roles	-
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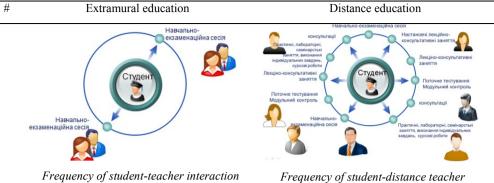
Figure 6. a) Students' points record of academic group for the certain educational discipline; b) Students progress record

The results of the analysis of using traditional and distance learning technologies for extramural education (under the conditions of territorial remoteness and employment of students, lack of the regular teachers' contact and controllability) are presented in the comparative table (see Table 2). Basing on the table, it can be concluded that all stages of educational management cycle with the use of distance learning technologies should be used for solving problems with effective management of individual work of students.

Table 2.

Problems with the management of students' individual work under the conditions of extramural education and their solving by transformation of extramural education to distance one

#	Extramural education	Distance education					
1.	Modularity and credit	iting of training material					
	Extramural students, as a rule, are studying only during examinations (2-3 weeks per semester), when it is very difficult to objectively check obtaining of the discipline modules or credits.	It allows for dividing the disciplines into logical units (modules) including learning new material and control measures to check its obtaining throughout the whole semester (16-20 weeks).					
2.	The use of the ECTS rating scale						
	Because of the irregularity and unsystematicity of contact hours with the teacher, the minimum number of control forms and their sameness, lack of systematic work during the semester (not from session to session), and low level of students' activity, it is impossible to objectively check the level of students' knowledge and use ECTS rating scale.	Distance education is convenient for the transformation to the modular scheme of the learning process, because it allows for visually structuring of the training material and using of different forms and methods of individual work, knowledge control. And the results of this are transparently recorded electronically. It makes it possible to successfully introduce ECTS rating scale into distance learning. Knowledge assessment system (e-tests) is objective, because it does not depend on the teacher.					
3.	Organization of extramural individual work of	f students focused on credit-transferring system					
3.1.	Manageability and individualization						
	Manageability is mainly impossible under the conditions of territorial remoteness, employment (work, family, etc.), and lack of regular contact with the teacher in the intersessional stage. Individualization can be achieved by giving individual tasks during sessions.	There is systematic feedback. There is a possibility of individualizing and differentiating the learning process through interactive communication. The teacher (depending on the success of the student) may apply a flexible, individual training technique, offer units of the training material (more targeted to the specific student), links to information resources that can ensure qualitative training of students for passing tests and examinations. Thus, it is possible in this way to manage the learning process. Geographic boundaries do not matter in this case.					



interaction

3.2.	Controllability				
	There is often the lack of controllability in the intersession stage.	There is a possibility of systematically checking the tasks with the help of different methods (tests, discussions, etc.). Also it makes it easier to control how the material has been learnt.			
3.3.	Conform	nity to plan			
	The lack of willingness to time management and the lack of the permanent control are one of characteristics of extramural education. It means that extramural students have certain freedom in choosing time for learning, but not always they can properly distribute this time.	It is possible to structure and plan learning of the material. Thus, training trajectory can be created as a class schedule (Figure 1), which is a kind of weekly online organizer or student navigation. Therefore, the students develop skills of individual work, self-discipline, and improve their time management. This is very important for students for whom it is difficult to plan and organize their learning.			

CONCLUSION

The management of extramural students' individual work with the use of traditional technologies is faced with lots of problems. They can be solved by a complex use of distance learning technologies for all stages the of educational management cycle, i.e. planning, motivation, organization, and regulation. The optimal conditions for organization of the qualitative management of extramural students' individual work are possible only in the case of distance education.

Distance learning becomes not so innovative in the course of time. It develops into one of the full-value educational forms and makes national borders are absolutely transparent for educational programmes under the ECTS conditions. Thus, since 2012 the M.Dragomnov NPU is characterized by conducting distance education of the Ukrainian language for the Brazilian citizens with the Ukrainian origin (local distance learning centers in such cities as Prudentopolis, Irati, Unio de Vitoria, Curitiba-Poltava, and Curitiba-Subras) and admitting foreign citizens to distance learning in the field of "Philology (Ukrainian language and literature)", and conducting education (since 2015) through local distance learning center in Prague (Czech Republic) for bachelors of "Jurisprudence" and "Management" (Analytical Report of the M.Dragomnov NPU 2016). The implementation of the distance learning form and credit-transferring system is a factor of the internationalization of Ukrainian higher education.

Many institutions are moving into the global education market to reach new target groups using online learning to 'export' their knowledge. Therefore, globalization of education, cross-cultural aspects, and access, equity, and ethics are research areas that should receive more attention. This is supported by the fact that the whole first section in the new International Handbook of Distance Education is devoted to "Diversity in Distance Education" (Evans, Haughey, Murphy 2008).

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