

INFLUENCE OF THE MODERN SYSTEMS FOR ELECTRONIC EDUCATION ON THE MOTIVATION OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE TO TURN EDUCATION INTO A LIFELONG ACTIVITY

Marina Mladenova¹, Bogomil Brezin²

University of Forestry, 10 Kliment Ohridski blvd, 1797 Sofia, Bulgaria,

e-mail: ¹marina_mladenova@mail.bg; ²beler@abv.bg

ABSTRACT

The traditional forms of education used to answer the needs of the young people at a time when it was possible with a relative certainty to foresee the knowledge and skills from which they are going to need in the years of their mature life. Today it is not like this. The young people cannot expect already to spend their whole life in one and the same sphere of activity and even at one and the same place; their professional way is about to change in a way could not be foreseen, and they need a broad circle of common skills, which will let them adapt. In a more complex and globalized world the creative skills, the ability to think in a multifunctional way, the skills in different fields, and their adaptability as a tendency are valued more than the specialized knowledge.

To answer these needs, it is necessary as part of the syllabuses on the disciplines, apart from the knowledge, which should be taught, to be given the results (the skills and the habits which are expected to be developed from the educated at different stages of their education).

In the present research a theoretical framework for electronic education is introduced and the issue for discussion is: Could the modern systems for electronic education provide the young people with skills and motivation for the turning of education into a whole life activity?

Key words: electronic education, interaction student-contents, interaction student-lecturer, interaction student-student, interaction student-interface

INTRODUCTION

The traditional forms of education answer the needs of the young people at a time when it was possible with a relative certainty to foresee the knowledge and the skills from which they need in the years of their mature life. Today it is not like that. The young people cannot expect to spend their whole life in one and the same sphere of activity and even in one and the same place; their professional way could change in a way which could not be foretold, and they need a broader circle of common skills, which will help them adapt. In a more and more complex and globalized

world the creative skills, the ability to think multifunctionally, the skills in different fields and the adaptability as a tendency are valued more than the specialized skills.

In connection to this during 2006 the EU accepted a European Framework for key skills¹, representing a reference instrument for the key skills, from which everyone needs to realize himself successfully in the society of knowledge. The key skills refer to the fields of knowledge, the skills and habits, which serve for personal realization, social integration, active civil behaviour and expiry

¹ The frame for key skills was created under the requirement of the European union in Lisbon in 2000, with the aim to point out and define the skills from which every citizen has need to realize successfully in

the knowledge society. The recommendation is accessible on the web-page: http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/site/en/oj/2006/l_394/l_39420061230en00100018.pdf

date for job hire. They include “traditional” skills such as knowledge of the mother tongue, knowledge of foreign languages, basic knowledge of Maths and the punctual sciences, computer skills, but also skills such as: the skill to learn to study, social and civil skills, initiativeness and entrepreneurship, as well as cultural consciousness and expression.

To answer these needs it is necessary as a part of these syllabuses on the disciplines to be given apart from the knowledge, which should be taught, to define the results (the skills and habits, which are expected to be developed from the students at different stages of their education).

In the present research the issue under discussion is: **Could the modern systems for electronic education provide the young people with skills and motivation for turning the education in a whole life activity?**

METHODS OF RESEARCH

The analysis is based on the acceptance of the following theoretical frames:

- The offering of courses for electronic education is important for the survival of the modern educational institution (Kambutu, 2002).
- Keegan (1990) defines distance learning as a system, characterized by:
 1. the separation of the lecturer from the student in a long part of the process of study;
 2. influence of the educational organization;
 3. providing of an opportunity for evaluation and self-assessment of the students
 4. the use of educational media for the presentation of the contents of the course
 5. two way communication between lecturer and student
- Holmberg (1983) considers that in the context of the formal education, the students study through participation in didactic conversations with their lecturers. The students express their ideas, and after that the lecturer takes the student in the working out, correcting and redirection of these ideas. The group and direct conversations student-teacher are the basic characteristics of this study. The directed didactic conversation encourages personal relations between lecturer and student, creating in this way a bigger motivation of the student and increases the results from the study.
- The theory of Holmberg for distance learning includes seven rules coming from the characteristics of the didactic conversations (Holmberg, 1995, p.47). They include:
 1. the feeling of personal connection between lecturer and student for the encouragement of the satisfaction and motivation;
 2. that these feelings will be assisted through well-made education materials and two-way communication;
 3. the motivation of the students is important for the completion of the educational aims;
 4. That the atmosphere of a friendly conversation supports the feeling of personal connection according to rule 1;
 5. that the communication in a natural conversation is easy to understand and remember;
 6. that the concept for conversation could be successfully transformed for the use through the media in the electronic education, which are at the disposal of the long distance students and
 7. the planning and teaching of the educational process are an exceptionally important factor in the long distance study.
- Moore (1989) considers that the lecturers in the long distance study should include all the members of the

educational community in the learning interactions, not only the lecturer and the students. He considers that in the working out of effective courses for long distance learning it follows to comprise the interaction student-lecturer, between the very students and student-contents. According to the theory of Moore the coordination is obligatory, integrated in the distance learning and this interaction is both one and two way.

- The interaction student-lecturer is that which distinguishes the self-study from the long distance learning. The lecturer ensures the student an organized plan or program, for the acquisition of the contents and communicates with them in the very process, as Holmberg (1995) points out in rule 7.
- The interaction student-student is in the form of group projects, members of discussion groups, etc. the role of this interaction for the whole effectiveness of the long distance education is discussed in different ways. According to some it is of considerable significance for the success of the students in a course, and others consider that the other students in fact take out from the success of the separate student. (Biner, Welsh, Barone, Summers, & Dean, 1997).
- Hillman, Willis and Gunawardena (1994) add interaction student-interface as an inseparable part from the concept of the long distance learning. This is the interaction which occurs

between the student and the technologies, used for the providing of the educational contents. They consider that the skills of the student to deal with the communication environment is a necessary condition to take part in a course for long distance learning and is a positive correlation with its success in this course. In order to accumulate knowledge from the contents of the course, the student should be literate concerning the technological environment for communication and interaction.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As was shown above, the need for the young people to possess the necessary key skills and educational achievements to be improved is a significant part of the strategies of the European Union for development and employment and for sustainable development². These strategies support the aims, outlined in the national programmes for the reform of the countries member-states. The requirement for skills is two way: the fast technological advance requires high qualification which should be constantly renewed, by at the same time the increasing internationalization and the new way of organization of the enterprises (for example with horizontal hierarchy) require social, communicative, entrepreneurial and cultural skills, which help the people adapt the changing environment.

The improvement of the achievements in education is important for the separate individuals because the personal achievements have influence on the social-economic of the students later. They are important also for the society, having in mind that the increase of

² The strategy of the EU for sustainable development requires the member states to develop education, which would assist the sustainable development. This could include education on issues such as utilization

of the renewable energy and transport systems, sustainable consumption and models for production, health care, knowledge of the media and responsible civil behaviour.

the success is connected with economic growth and competitiveness of the economy.

The personal success in one society of knowledge and economy, based on knowledge requires the ability for continuation of education in the whole life in different ways, as well as an ability for fast adaptation to the changing situations. This supposes in the graduation of their high education the students to have qualification, and to be motivated to take responsibility for their education in their whole life.

Owing to the research in the field of education, the concept for education continues to develop, but a long way needs to be passed, before it is wholly reflected in the educational methods and organization in the educational institutions. Discussions are held for the areas in which the “traditional” methods of teaching of knowledge and the requirement on the part of the students to remember them, could take a leading role, both concerning the benefits, in which the teaching could and should turn into an activity, focused on the student, in which both lecturer and student actively build knowledge and skills. In this aspect the information and communication technologies and the systems for electronic education in private, have huge potential for the assistance of self-study, the common accumulation of knowledge and development of skills. The interactive communication which is in the basis of the web-based long-distance learning includes the creation of a dynamic zone, change of space, specific navigation, depending on the preference of the student, the dynamic design, the use of a specific computer code in a language of a higher level, the mobile technologies and constant innovations. (Simpson, 2013). A proof for that are the available instruments of discipline in the system Blackboard (fig. 1).

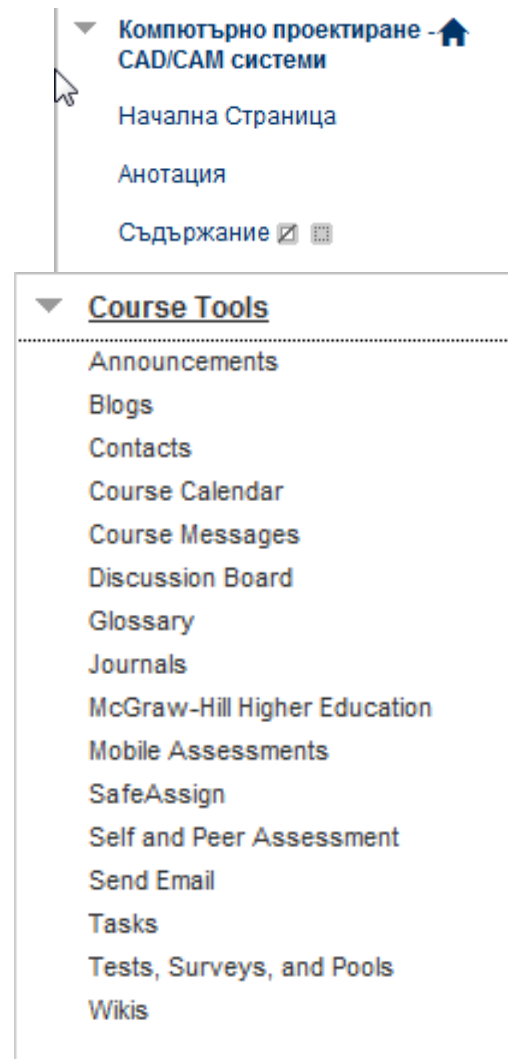


Figure 1: Instruments of discipline in the system Blackboard.

As could be seen from fig. 1 at the disposal of the lecturer for the presentation of the syllabus contents and control of the acquired knowledge are both the classical instruments such as “Syllabus“, “Contents”, (in it are published the theme materials and lectures),”Tasks”, “Glossary” and “Tests”, as well as interactive instruments giving the possibility to the students to express personal opinion on pointed by the lecturer topics such as “Blogs”, “Journals”, “Table for discussions” and Wikis. These instruments are very well-known and well-accepted by the student. This is caused by their use in the social networks with which the most of the students

are acquainted. In a correct use of these instruments for the evaluation from the lecturer and self-assessment and estimation on the part of the rest of the students, they could turn into a strong motivating factor for the accumulation of skills and motivation for the turning of the education into a life-long activity.

In the use of systems for electronic education the communication student-lecturer could be by sending emails, publishing of announcements, which expands its time and dimension range – it is already not obligatory to be only in definite academic hours for the discipline in the academic institution. The fact that the electronic communication is the one with which the young people have got used to should be taken into consideration.

For the motivation of the young people and the creation of skills for the turning of education into a lifelong activity, the most significant is the role of the lecturer. It is of key significance for the whole educational institution. Namely the lecturers are mediators between the fast developing world and the young people who prepare themselves to enter it. The requirements which are put to the lecturers get more and more: they work with groups of students who are various (concerning mother tongue, sex, ethnic group, religion, skills, etc.); it is required from them to use the opportunities, which the new technologies provide, to answer the demand of individual education and assist the students to become independent in their whole life study.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion we will give answer to the question *“Could modern technologies for electronic education provide the young people with skills and motivation for the turning of education into a lifelong activity?”* -YES, but on a definite condition if the interactions are well-structured and used:

- Student-contents

- Student-lecturer
- Student-student
- Student-interface

Most important according to us is the interaction student-lecturer.

Several issues arise which are interesting for further research: If the lecturers have the necessary qualification and skills, to change the syllabuses and methods of study, in order to respond to the specificity of the electronic education? Are the students really interested in interaction with other students, enrolled in the same course? What personal skills have the students who have passed a course in electronic education developed? What is their assessment for the application of these skills in their future development as specialists?

The research of these issues will allow an improvement of the quality of electronic education and turn it into a factor motivating the young people to turn education into a life-long activity.

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