

## ПЕДАГОГІКА

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**Liliia MONASTYROVA,**

*orcid.org/0000-0002-4973-7308*

*Associate Professor at the Department of Philology, Translation and Strategic Communications  
National Academy of National Guard of Ukraine  
(Kharkiv, Ukraine) [monastyrova.lilia@gmail.com](mailto:monastyrova.lilia@gmail.com)*

### PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PEDAGOGICAL ASPECTS AND PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE OF A FOREIGN LANGUAGE DISTANCE LEARNING AT UNIVERSITY

*The paper deals with the study of psychological and pedagogical aspects of a foreign language distance learning at higher educational institutions. Based on the analysis of foreign and national psychological and pedagogical studies, the following principles of psychological content of distance foreign language learning at universities have been highlighted: analytics, interactivity, adaptivity, free access, agility, assessment, interference-free learning, active feedback and dynamic. It has been discovered that in addition to effective training and methodological quality of educational materials applied in distance learning course, the significance of studying the factors that improve the success of this training process (gender, types of temperament, dominance of hemispheres, types of perception, types of listeners according to management strategy, types of information perception and generalization). It was mentioned that consideration of students' cognitive styles in the process of foreign language mastering involves (together with other components) the individualized methods, tools and technologies of distance learning.*

*Distance learning technologies require the development of individual training programs, considering the specifics of a foreign language distance learning. It has been determined that one of the individual learning programs, allowing for the specifics of distance learning, is a computer learning task, considered as one of the main tools to effectively organize students' independent work, which in turn provides the interactivity of their foreign language learning.*

*As the conclusion of the article notes, distance learning promotes the implementation of the modern educational paradigm, the integral components of which are student-centered learning, individualization and differentiation of educational activities, the possibility of autonomous learning, students' self-education and self-development. Distance learning is also a motivating factor in a foreign language learning, as it contributes not only to the development of students' general cultural and professional competence, but also to foreign language communicative competence. All these factors make it necessary to develop modern programs for the development of linguistic education, as well as the model of distance learning, in particular, foreign languages, from a pedagogical position and considering the socio-cultural, cultural and psychological characteristics of students.*

**Key words:** *psychological and pedagogical aspects, a foreign language distance course, interactive interaction, a computer-learning task.*

**Лілія МОНАСТІРЬОВА,**

*orcid.org/0000-0002-4973-7308*

*доцент кафедри філології, перекладу та стратегічних комунікацій  
Національної академії Національної гвардії України  
(Харків, Україна) [monastyrova.lilia@gmail.com](mailto:monastyrova.lilia@gmail.com)*

### ПСИХОЛОГО-ПЕДАГОГІЧНІ АСПЕКТИ ТА ПРАКТИЧНИЙ ДОСВІД ДИСТАНЦІЙНОГО НАВЧАННЯ ІНОЗЕМНІЙ МОВИ В УНІВЕРСИТЕТІ

*Робота присвячена дослідженню психолого-педагогічних аспектів дистанційного навчання іноземній мові у ЗВО. На основі аналізу закордонних та вітчизняних психолого-педагогічних досліджень виділено наступні принципи психологічного змісту дистанційного навчання іноземній мові у контексті вищої професійної освіти: аналітичність, інтерактивність, адаптивність, вільний доступ, динамічність, оцінювання, навчання без перешкод, активний зворотний зв'язок, динамічність. У статті висвітлюється, що крім ефективного навчання та методично якісного навчального контенту, що застосовується на курсі дистанційного навчання, вивчення факторів, які підвищують успішність вищезазначеного навчального процесу (стать, типи темпераменту, домінування півкуль, типи сприйняття, типи слухачів щодо стратегії управління, типи сприйняття та узагальнення інформації) має велике значення. Зазначається, що прийняття до уваги когнітивних стилів студентів у контексті*

опанування іноземною мовою передбачає (поряд з іншими компонентами) індивідуалізовані методи, засоби та технології дистанційного навчання.

Засоби дистанційного навчання вимагають розробки індивідуальних програм з урахуванням специфіки дистанційного навчання іноземної мови. Встановлено, що комп'ютерне навчальне завдання, яке розглядається як один з ключових засобів ефективної організації самостійної роботи студентів та забезпечує інтерактивність їх навчання іноземній мові – одна з індивідуальних програм навчання, що враховують специфіку дистанційного навчання.

У висновках статті авторка зазначає, що дистанційне навчання сприяє впровадженню сучасної освітньої парадигми, значущими компонентами якої є процес навчання, який насамперед орієнтується на студента; індивідуалізація та диференціація академічної діяльності, можливість автономного навчання, самоосвіта та саморозвиток студентів. Дистанційне навчання вважається фактором, що мотивує у контексті викладання іноземної мови, оскільки сприяє розвитку не лише загальнокультурної та професійної компетенції студентів, а також іншомовної комунікативної компетенції. Всі вищезазначені фактори зумовлюють потребу розробляти сучасні програми розвитку іншомовної вищої освіти, а також моделі дистанційних курсів з педагогічних позицій та з урахуванням соціокультурних, культурних та психологічних особливостей студентів.

**Ключові слова:** психолого-педагогічні аспекти, дистанційний курс іноземної мови, інтерактивна взаємодія, комп'ютерне навчальне завдання.

**Statement of the problem.** Amid the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Ukrainian higher educational institutions have made the decision, as per the recommendation of the Ministry of Education and Science, to transition to online learning. In this regard, face-to-face classes, including lectures, practical classes and even laboratory classes with virtual analogues, have been moved to an online environment. Amidst the difficulties brought forth by the ongoing war, the Ministry of Education and Science in Ukraine has displayed praiseworthy foresight by recommending the adoption of advanced asynchronous online learning technologies. They have strongly supported the use of electronic resources, highlighted the benefits of the Moodle educational platform, emphasized the importance of regional platforms, and emphasized the wealth of resources available at higher educational institutions. In the electronic information and educational environment, teachers have faced the task of adapting to distance learning. This has required them to utilize various distance-learning technologies to organize the learning process effectively. They have had to explore different methods of providing electronic content and make use of the communication tools available to enhance interaction between students and teachers. Despite the challenges presented by the pandemic, distance education has provided numerous opportunities for continuing education at higher educational institutions. However, it is important to note that not all universities have been able to embrace this restructuring of the learning process. This is due to varying levels of information infrastructure development, accessibility of academic disciplines, and utilization of digital platforms and services.

As currently foreign language education is considered as one of the basic components in the structure of competence model of future specialist training, the role of foreign language in training

specialists at higher educational institutions where foreign language course is communicative-pragmatic and professionally oriented has increased significantly. Nowadays, universities are faced with the task of not only modernizing the content of training courses, but also implementing new technologies for developing foreign language communicative competence of future graduates. The analysis of recent research in the area of foreign language teaching innovations has shown that one of the actual directions is the integration of modern information and communication technologies into the academic process. The development of modern digital technologies causes an increase in the availability of high-quality higher education, which leads to the step-by-step integration of distance learning technologies at different levels of education, as well as in different areas of training and specializations in the context of higher education. It should be emphasized that distance learning at higher educational institutions is designed in accordance with the goals, objectives and content of full-time education, as it is defined by the standards and implemented in the framework of educational programs for face-to-face learning. The fundamental difference between distance learning and full-time education is primarily in the form of presentation of educational content, means of interaction between a teacher and a student. The presentation form is determined by the specifics of distance learning and capacities of the software and information environment.

Nowadays, distance technologies have key role in improving the quality of foreign language teaching in higher education. Numerous computer programs for independent foreign language learning have been developed all over the world, extensive experience has been gained in constructing online tests, and many thematic and specialized portals and websites have been set up. Every day their

number and quality are increasing. However, as the researches show, insufficient consideration has been given to psychological and psycho-pedagogical aspects of modeling and integrating these systems in these developments; the concept of information and communication computer-based educational environment has not yet received proper consideration from a psychological perspective; didactic and methodological issues of foreign language distance learning have not yet obtained proper psychological substantiation. Consequently, the lack of appropriate studying the psychological aspect of digital foreign language teaching in extraordinary circumstances at higher educational institutions determines the subject of this article and the necessity to investigate the issue in question from different perspectives.

#### **Analysis of recent research and publications.**

One of the most challenging problems of higher education is the psychological substantiation for organizing individual learning in an information and communication computer-based learning environment. This problem is closely related to a number of specific psychological and pedagogical tasks. Nowadays, there are almost no researches, thoroughly and comprehensively revealing psychological conditions for organizing a foreign language distance learning in the context of higher professional education. The didactic and methodological issues of a foreign language distance learning have not been well grounded in the psychological aspects so far.

In scientific and pedagogical literature, the psychology of distance learning has been traditionally considered an interdisciplinary field of study for the following reasons: distance learning as an e-learning is an educational phenomenon including cognitive, social, neurological and other processes; psychology consists of a variety of disciplines, such as cognitive psychology, developmental psychology, social psychology, clinical psychology and neuroscience psychology (Zheng Yan, 2003).

A review of the literature on research issues has shown that the psychological basis for the development and implementation of information and communication technologies, including distance learning technologies, are still insufficiently developed and are in their formative stages. A few decades ago, researchers began to pay more attention to the subject, but mostly their studies considered certain aspects of the problem: (1) students' information perception according to their psychological types in distance learning (Биков, 2010); (2) influence of personality psycho-typological characteristics on the specific features of a foreign language learning

and interiorization of scientific knowledge (Salmani Nodoushan, 2013); (3) identifying factors influencing the distance learning effectiveness in terms of students' specific psychological needs when designing a distance learning course; (4) classification of distance learning principles; (5) motivational sphere of students' educational activity and applying author's test modifications (Busse, & Walter, 2013).

As the analysis of the aforementioned studies has shown, the focus of scientists' attention are certain aspects of psychological and psycho-pedagogical aspects of the development and implementation of distance technologies at higher educational institutions. However, there are quite few studies, on the influence of distance technologies on students' personal and cognitive development, as well as consideration of cognitive styles, psychological characteristics of students in the context of a foreign language learning based on mentioned technologies.

**The purpose of the article** is to determine the psychological and pedagogical aspects of a foreign language distance learning at higher educational institution. The main objective: to analyze psychological and pedagogical peculiarities of a foreign language distance learning at a university, to identify the factors increasing the success of a foreign language distance learning.

**Research methods.** The following methods have been applied in the research: analysis, systematization and synthesis of psychological and pedagogical literature regarding the research problems; theoretical modelling and observation.

**The basic material.** Based on the analysis of foreign and national psychological and pedagogical studies, the following principles of psychological content of distance foreign language learning at higher educational institutions have been highlighted:

*Analytics* – applying electronic educational technologies in the process of teaching a foreign language, it is possible to obtain detailed information on the educational process (features of students' behavior in a virtual environment, the learning process, assessing educational attainments of students and providing feedback (Ymanets, 2016; Kim, 2016).

*Interactivity* reflects intersubjective activity, teacher-student dialogue, interaction between the subjects of the learning process, considering their psychological makers.

*Free access.* The Internet provides access to any electronic educational resource in a foreign language from anywhere in the world and at any time of the day.

*Adaptivity* reflects the individual pace of study, self-selection of course registration and the timing of tutorials and exams. Foreign language teachers

have the opportunity to modify and adapt electronic learning resources to the students, allowing for a learner-centered and result-oriented learning process. The choice of receiving information reflects the creative and autonomous process of transforming this information by the students according to the objectives stated before.

*Assessment.* Distance technology makes it possible to provide a continuous and long-term process for assessing the development of students' foreign language proficiency.

*Agility* reflects the creation of information networks, databases for distance learning, allowing the student to self-organize the educational program according to his/her individual abilities, goals, and opportunities. Information technologies provide faster rearrangement and widening of educational curricula as needed, as well as enabling communication between teachers and students in different ways (Ymanets, 2016). Taking into consideration the individual students' personality structure determines the relevance of the educational process to their individual characteristics based on three levels: psychophysiological, psychological and socio-psychological.

*Active feedback* fixes continuous feedback on every cognitive action and every step in the interaction of the participants in the educational environment.

*Interference-free learning* reflects the broadening of communicative opportunities between a teacher and a student, providing the conditions for comfortable interaction in the time and educational environment.

*Dynamic* reflects the identification of students' potential and self-determination in the context of gaining specific experience and organizing educational interactions.

The successful foreign language distance-learning course at a university depends primarily on the following components: the efficiency of teacher-student interaction, regardless of their location; pedagogical technologies applied in the above-mentioned process; the reliability of the developed methodological foreign language materials and means of their presentation; the availability and accessibility of feedback. In addition to the above mentioned, psychological comfort of the educational environment for the student is one of the prerequisites for the success of his/her foreign language learning. There are two important aspects in the concept of psychological comfort: dialogue-interpersonal i.e., reducing "technical" efforts (facilitating technological procedure of interaction, providing unambiguous understanding and social-organizational in the concept of psychological comfort includes two components:

satisfaction of social instinct and personal integrity (Hew and other, 2020).

Some authors, taking into consideration the specific psychological needs of students in the development of a distance-learning course, highlight the factors influencing on the effectiveness of this training process:

– *Gender (men, women)* – male students require a high pace of learning content presentation; a wide range of diverse and non-standardly presented information; variety and constant updating of the tasks and logical tasks offered for solving; minimum revisions of the previous material; work in the class in the exploratory mode, with an emphasis on the independence of decisions made; introducing forms of lessons relieving static tension; applying group forms of work with the obligatory inclusion of competitive elements and the change of the leader; dosed emotionality of presenting the learning material, an access to emotions and feelings through logic; need for a positive constructive assessment of the work performed. Female students requires a gradual and orderly pace of the lesson in which new learning material is presented; sufficient number of repetitions for better mastering; dosage of the amount and variety of new information; a large number of model tasks, making it easier to operate what they have learned; an approach to the formulation of rules through speech skills: learning the rules and teaching how to apply them in practice; emotional coloring of the new learning material: movement from emotions to logical understanding; using group forms of work with an emphasis on mutual assistance; applying visual material during the lesson, learning based on visual memory; emotionally colored evaluation of any work performed with marking of perspectives.

– *Types of temperament* (choleric, sanguine, phlegmatic, and melancholic). Some academics in their studies suggest that choleric and sanguine have more difficulty adapting to a foreign language distance-learning environment than phlegmatic and melancholic. It is assumed that this is caused by the fact that choleric and sanguine have extroverted orientation, and phlegmatic and melancholic – introverted orientation, respectively the types of temperament with an introverted attitude in life prefer to spend time in their home environment (distance learning takes place in this environment) rather than in society. It is also emphasized that phlegmatics experience calmness during distance learning, which is already characteristic of them, and choleric experience a lack of communication.

– *Dominance of hemispheres* (left hemisphere is responsible for logical thinking, right – for creativity,



intuition). For right-hemispheric students, the following learning activities are applied: synthesis (compiling problems, crossword puzzles, quizzes, etc.); tasks with a limited time limit; operating spatial relationships; tasks in pictures, diagrams, tables, projects, etc. For left-hemispheric students the following methods of learning activities are involved: analysis; timeless tasks; logical, non-standard tasks; operating with signs on the surface; tasks in symbols, multiple revisions; tasks for finding mistakes, etc.

– *Types of perception* of information by listeners: visual (information is perceived with images), auditory (information is encoded with words), kinesthetic (information is perceived with sensations) and digital or discrete (dialogue and analysis dominate). Considering the peculiarities of students' cognitive styles in the process of foreign language learning involves (in addition to other components) the application of individualized teaching methods, tools and technologies of distance learning. For example, students with a visual type of information perception during a foreign language distance learning require a greater variety of visual aids (pictures, videos), audialists should be provided with logical schemes and training materials that they can hear. Kinetic learners should be offered interactive tasks, i.e., foreign language content that they can quickly put into practice.

– *Types of information perception and generalization*: "abstract" (from the abstract to the concrete), "concrete" (from the concrete to the abstract) or intuit (generalizes everything) and sensory (particularizes everything).

– *Types of listeners according to management strategy*: persons with an internal strategy (everything depends on themselves), persons with an external strategy (everything depends on external circumstances).

In the context of higher professional education, which is now realized with the dominant involvement of distance learning technologies, the requirements to the level of student's subjective qualities development are especially significant. At the same time, the specifics of a foreign language distance learning are such that the students' subject development conditions, especially, opportunities for subject-subject interaction of the educational process participants are limited, and further development of a student as a subject of educational and professional activity is rather problematic with a low initial level of subjectivity.

Foreign language distance learning involves, primarily, interactive teacher-student interaction. The concept of "interactive interaction" is actively used

in both national and foreign pedagogical literature. First, interactive interaction is defined as a dialogue between a user and a program, i.e., exchange of text commands (requests) and responses (invitations). Where possible to ask questions in an optional form, using a keyword, in a form with a limited set of symbols provides the opportunity to choose the content of the learning material and the mode of operation. The more opportunities to control the program, the more actively student takes part in the dialogue, the greater the interactivity. Interactive interaction implies a dialogue of any subjects with each other using the means and methods available to them. This assumes active involvement in the dialogue of both parties – exchange of questions and answers, management of the dialogue, control over the execution of decisions made. In the context of a foreign language distance learning, the subjects of interactive interaction are teachers and students, while the means of such interaction are e-mail, teleconferencing, online dialogues, etc.

In face-to-face foreign language learning, the teacher is able to adjust the course of the lesson if students have difficulties in completing a task, give more time to work on the topic or suggest an extra homework to practice the theme. In distance learning, it is difficult to monitor task progress and it is usually not possible to make course corrections. In this case, it is advisable to provide individual classes to remove difficulties – these may be synchronous face-to-face or online classes, but the effectiveness of delayed processing of difficulties is slower. In face-to-face classes, questions can be answered in the current mode and the dynamics of teacher-student interaction will be much higher. However, some researchers point out that reduced face-to-face contact with the foreign language teacher can also play a positive role in some cases, as the student's embarrassment and lack of confidence, which is seen in direct contact, disappears. At the same time, scholars do not deny the possibility of using face-to-face meetings with the teacher to solve a number of complex issues (Bruff and other, 2013).

It should be noted that distance learning complicates the process of practicing speaking and written foreign language skills. Whereas written language requires the teacher's supervision, the development of speaking skills involves either direct involvement in a learning conversation or its direct observation, e.g., in order to avoid misremembering of speech patterns. The development of speaking skills in a foreign language requires the presence of a teacher, in which case online group classes become difficult and individual support is time-consuming.

Distance learning technologies imply the development of individual learning programs based on the specifics of a foreign language distance learning. Higher education traditionally divides students into subgroups according to their language proficiency level, e.g., by the results of an "entrance" test. However, it is common for the groups to be unevenly divided, even when redistribution occurs within the same ongoing course rather than focusing on a single training direction. In the context of distance learning, it becomes possible to create several levels of training programs to be implemented in a single course. In this way, the student will learn a foreign language comfortably at a level of difficulty that is appropriate to his/her basic training.

One of the individual learning programs considering the specifics of distance learning is a computer learning task, regarded as one of the main tools to efficiently organize students' independent work, which in its turn provides the interactivity of their foreign language learning (Tang and other, 2020).

The unique characteristics of computer-based learning can be summarized as follows: active involvement of students, constant support for self-monitoring of their actions, personalized learning and cognitive activities, adaptable control over students' learning and cognitive activities that gradually empowers them to become self-directed, application of a reflective approach, and maximum individualization of progress throughout the learning process.

According to pedagogical aspect, computer-based learning tasks in the process of foreign language teaching primarily solve the following problems: development of students' need for self-learning; promotion of students' creative qualities; formation of cognitive independence. Intensifying students' independent cognitive activity, they play a vital role in the organizational and didactic structure of a distance-learning course for foreign languages. Computer-based learning tasks follow a didactic structure containing clear goals, the application of knowledge and methods, the development of new knowledge and methods, the evaluation of cognitive activity, the practical application of new knowledge, and a comprehensive system of information support and guidance.

When developing and designing a task for computer-based learning in a foreign language, it is recommended to utilize the following technology: first, define a focused thematic section; then, structure the content for foreign language acquisition, creating a well-organized and logical framework for the section being studied; finally, carefully select the key components of the topic being taught to ensure effective learning.

Stages for the technology of modeling a learning computer task in the process of a foreign language distance learning are following: (1) to determine the purpose of the task, which specifies the teaching element to be studied; identify the required amount of knowledge of the teaching units and the list of knowledge components for the concrete learning element; (2) to qualify the basic knowledge necessary to be used as a reference in the process of mastering new learning content; (3) based on the foundational knowledge, create a learning component of a computer-based training activity, which is specific (completing tests, exercises, sentence analysis, translation plan, etc.); (4) to plan possible actions to be taken by students to complete the cognitive components; (5) to select the expected ways of achieving the goal (modelling, simulation, demonstration, video, audio, scheme); (6) to create a cognitive component of the learning computer task; structure the concept; build a pattern; model an algorithm of actions; (7) to organize feedback effectively, it is crucial to plan adequately the testing and analyze the results of the cognitive component of a task; (8) the main objective is to create comprehensive systems that effectively evaluate students' understanding and skills by incorporating tests, exercises, and other means of assessment; (9) to provide students with a complete package of support and guidance, including reference materials, specialized information related to the computer-based learning tasks, concise information about the foreign language course was taking online (including grammar materials and common speech phrases), exemplary demonstrations of how to tackle computer-based learning tasks, and clear instructions to assist you in completing each task successfully.

The foreign language course using distance learning adopts a module-based approach. The set of modules can be tailored to accommodate different training directions, levels of basic knowledge, or the desired level of immersion in the subject. The degree of "immersion" will depend both on the expected learning outcomes set by the program and on the goals set by the student. Therefore, it becomes possible to have multilevel training within the modules stated. It is important to highlight that in this particular case, the module plays a crucial role in the learning process. It covers everything from the introductory lesson to the final assessment of the material mastery.

A key factor in distance learning is the student's readiness and motivation to work independently. The student, receiving the necessary amount of learning materials from the teacher, develops the ability to self-organize and self-monitor. The application of unified training units allows ensuring complete interaction

between a teacher and a student. A modular presentation of the material provides students with a more effective means of acquiring the knowledge, skills, and abilities they require. Likewise, for teachers, it provides an opportunity to exercise full control over the quality and quantity of the learning content being mastered. In addition, incorporating standalone units of educational content enhances intellectual engagement, as students are required to thoroughly read the provided educational material and provide well-founded answers to the teacher's questions. At this stage, the teacher can fully evaluate the level of mastered material and determine the quality of the student's independent work (Bruff and other, 2013).

The modern task of higher educational process is to develop a free and creative personality. Thus, during the learning process, the student becomes not an object, but a subject of cognitive activity. In addition, this means the priority of independent activities, the need for students to be active in searching, processing, comprehending the information they need. Such an approach primarily includes: (1) reconsideration of the position of a teacher as a presenter and practically the only source of information for students; (2) necessity for teachers to monitor students' independent work in a timely manner, which can be achieved through the included intermediate task systems, based on the results of which students either continue their studies or work through the insufficiently studied material; (3) mastering flexible forms of lesson structure, such as group work, and work on projects, which cannot be fully implemented during the classroom lesson.

Many researchers argue that equipping students with information and communication technologies to prepare for independent work in foreign language studies enhances their comprehension of the subject, facilitates analysis and organization of the acquired material, and enables effective planning and communication of their findings.

The significance of evaluating the effectiveness of distance learning in foreign language education cannot be overstated. In addition to fostering personal growth, it also aligns perfectly with student-centered teaching practices within the educational system. Distance learning technologies can be applied to provide pedagogical support for students' independent work in a foreign language. Furthermore, the incorporation of

Internet-based testing can be introduced as a valuable component in the current approach to teaching foreign languages at higher education institutions. Additionally, the development of electronic educational resources with a gamified approach can greatly enhance independent learning of a foreign language. Lastly, an effective algorithm can be offered to guide students in utilizing Internet resources to enhance their writing skills in a foreign language.

#### **Conclusions and prospects for further research.**

Nowadays, the system of distance learning is being intensively developed and improved. Foreign language distance learning applications are rapidly growing at higher education institutions. This expansion is the result of various factors, such as the implementation of elective courses and the effective integration of formal and non-formal education. Additionally, it is crucial to acknowledge the role of teachers' professional development in further advancing these applications. It is crucial to emphasize the significant role that distance learning plays in the implementation of the modern educational paradigm. The essential components of this paradigm include student-centered learning, personalized and differentiated learning activities, as well as opportunities for autonomous learning, self-education, and self-development among students. Distance learning is also a motivating factor in learning foreign languages, as it contributes not only to the development of general cultural and professional competences of students, but also to foreign language communicative competence.

Considering these factors, it is crucial to develop innovative programs that promote linguistic education. This includes designing a model for distance learning, specifically for foreign languages. It is crucial to approach this from a pedagogical perspective, while keeping in mind the sociocultural, cultural, and psychological aspects of students.

There is great potential for future research in creating a comprehensive program that explores the psychological and pedagogical aspects of distance learning a foreign language. The program should consider the cognitive and personal characteristics required for successful learning through technology. It should also explore the effects of distance learning on students' cognitive and personal development.

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