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Shift in distance learning and its related English terminology in the context of education digitalisation in Latvia

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Distance education has been existing for decades; however, it has become especially prominent in the process of education digitalisation, and its popularity boosted in the last two years. In the course of time, the implication of the term 'distance education' has been undergoing changes along with the technological developments in the sphere of education and the emergence of the Internet. As a result, such terms as e-learning, online learning, distance learning and remote learning have appeared. Covid-19 outbreak has made its adjustments in the field of education all over the world, including Latvia. Consequently, the above-mentioned distance education related terminology has been affected as well. Thus, the necessity to research the new implications of the terms has arisen. The goal of the current corpus-based research lies in the investigation of new implications of distance learning terminology, influenced by the coronavirus as well as the provision of clarifying definitions. In order to trace the meaning shift over the last two decades, emphasizing the changes brought by the current situation, such sources as research papers and online press have been investigated. The data were collected and analysed with the help of the AntConc software. The results revealed that the terms have acquired new connotations and undergone shifts in their meanings. Moreover, they are used ambiguously, which caused the necessity to provide comprehensible definitions of the stated terms. It was reached within the framework of the present research.

Biographical note(s) of the author(s)

PhD student Jevgenija Selivanova is an ESP educationalist. She specialises in distance education and educational digital environment. Her research relates to distance learning and its numerous aspects. The main goal of the research involves the development of guidelines for effective online language courses in higher educational institutions.

PhD student Olga Pašinska is an ESP educationalist. Her research interests include language acquisition at tertiary level and ESP. The goal of her doctoral research is the development of linguodidactic guidelines for the enhancement of ESP students' interactional competence. She is a FORTHEM Alliances Steering Committee and "Multilingualism in Higher Education" lab's member.

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