Roles of the Students and Teachers in Distance Education

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aytekin ISMAN
Research Assistant Zehra ALTINAY
Research Assistant Fahriye ALTINAY

Eastern Mediterranean University- NCTR

INTRODUCTION

By the development of the technology, every styles of life and human being action face with changes. Fast, global and remarkable time come to be considerable. People can reach fast, useful information through the computer based system. Social, global, cultural, educational competitiveness have been changed by the implication of the technology. Therefore; these changes also affect the learning styles, duration and method of individuals. People start to search for fast, accountable, home atmosphere knowledge learning instead of the classical learning in classrooms (Clark, 2001). Distance Education refers the interactive, educational process between two people, student and teacher, separated by the physical distance (Harry et al., 1993, p.32). Distance Education requires to be interested in learner's individual differences and in the way students reacts to the media. Therefore; in learning process also personality features, intellectual abilities, cognitive and learning styles are important concern in distance education (Harry et al., 1993).

The role of the distance education in twenty-one century can be summarized as that distance education programs catch the huge popularity in the educational world with having and spreading discussible sides. Therefore; the concrete questions come to mind of us what distance education is. From the teacher-centered campus, students reach immediate course application through the internet that there can be huge distance among the students and teacher interaction by distance education. If the main concepts are the science and technology today's context, these concepts leads all fields to be fast, global implementation. The educational fields should catch the new effective tool of the world with the existence of distance education. For the societal development; education should be the first element with providing easy, immediate resources, potential qualified people, new approach to educational world in order to catch contemporary standards. When we examine the properties of the distance education; the sort of approximation in the roles of the communicators can be obvious with the reviews of relevance articles and studies. The development of the learning through distance learning-education based on the individualistic learning process which means that learner reach the knowledge by research on computer assisted programmes under the fast, comfortable conditions individually for catching stable learning rather than lecturing method. Distance Education is really related by the discovery of truth for gaining antithesis sides of the thoughts to get the exact knowledge (Willis, 2002).

Distance educators refer to three distinct applications of computer to the home study environment. These applications are Computer Managed Instruction, Computer Aided Learning and Computer Conferencing. Computer Managed Instruction is management that facilitates the administration of learning process. It can provide electronic counselling of students, on-line registration, institutional record keeping, tracking of student progress. Computer Aided Learning includes software applications to teach students through pre-structured and programmed materials, different subjects, and concepts matter. This courseware either replaces or supplements material which students are expected to get through other media (print, television, audio cassette). This falls into two categories like tutorials and simulation. Computer Conferencing is the name given to an electronic network that enables individuals to communicate via computers in delayed synchronic time either as a group or between two individuals or with database. In its simplest form, distance educators to allow speedy and effective two-way communication between

instructor and student have used electronic mail. This provides discussion atmosphere to clarify problems. These three formations built up the distance education form. Distance Education requires alternative learning process, roles of teacher and students (Clark, 2001).

People who have roles in distance education can be categorized in four subtitles; a- Students: In distance education, students have role to learn. In that process, student has difficult and different roles according to traditional learning process. b- Teacher: The main role of the teacher is the design of the course and setting the needs of students. Teacher has role to guide the students. c- Designer Groups: These responsibilities are the real establishers of process in the distance education whatever they are not in the visual representation of distance education. They are the responsible to design material, cyber and digital environment for the effective teaching-learning atmosphere. d- Directors: In the all institutes, there are people who plan this kind of education and implementers the education process. Directors let their responsibilities to technique personnel when the education process start.

In terms of the roles of students and teachers; there are three types of interaction within the distance education. The terms of interdepence, distance and interaction should interplay each other's in the process. These three types of interaction were labelled as learner-content interaction, learner-instructor interaction, and learner-learner interaction.

> a- Learner-content interaction
> b- Learner-instructor interaction
> c- Learner-learner interaction

The relevance research emphasised that distance education application for members' interaction reflect the effective ideas sharing according to face-to-face communication. These interactions can be done through the email and chatting (Harry et al., 1993). These three types of interactions play a key role in distance education system.

In a summary, we can say that distance education come into evolution and well known with some particular developments like; the economical and social contexts have changed; the number of unemployed workers is increasing and all they need to be retrained; knowledge has became one of the most important economical forces; knowledge is rapidly expanding and its life time becomes increasingly shorter; to survive in the market, companies need to change, to train and retrain their employed; investing in the human resources seems to be the only way for a sustainable development (Mario and Heinze, 2001).These kinds of the evolution access to the educational fields and create alternative way of easy, efficient learning through distance education.

THE AIM OF RESEARCH

Distance Education is a form of education in which the course contents are delivered and the interactions are provided by the technologies and methodologies of the Internet. It is online environment that allows people to interact with others asynchronously or synchronously in collaborative environments; to gain access to remote multimedia databases for active, resource-based learning; and to manage self-paced, individual learning in a flexible way. Moreover, the Internet allows students to enroll in a course from anywhere in the world at any time. There is a new vision developed during the past 15-20 years, strongly influenced by the social and cognitive sciences. The educational system now focuses on learning rather than on teaching. The developments of learning theory have changed the nature of learning styles and the perception of the learner. Knowledge is considered as socially constructed through action, communication and reflection as involving learners (Huebner and Wiener, 2001).

To design effective distance education programs, it is important to understand how learning occurs and the factors that influence learning process. How people learn is the major concern on learning process. There are three major impact on learning 1) cognitive learning strategies 2) metacognitive activities for planning and self-regulation 3) learner's goals and motivation. Cognitive strategies can not be divorced from learner's purpose in

using them. Therefore; goal and motivation of learner highly influence the cognitive strategies. The distance education requires intrinsic motivation that provides skill development, intellectual interests, challenge or personal growth that was approved by the relevance research results (Gibson, 1997).

There are also different design considerations in distance education. It is possible to identify some general principles that apply to all of them; 1- Good structure 2- Clear objectives 3- Small units: 4-Planned participation 5- Completeness 6- Repetition 7- Synthesis 8- Stimulation 9- Variety 10- Open-ended 11- Feedback 12- Continuous Evaluation (Moore, Kearsley, 1996, p.122).

It is important to create reflection in distance education that means engaging individuals to explore their experiences in order to lead new understanding and appreciations in terms of the students. Holmberg (1995) handled the guided didactic conversation between teacher and student as pervasive characteristic of distance education; 1- Those feelings of personal relation between the teaching and learning parties promote study pleasure and motivation. 2- That such feelings can be fostered by well-developed self instructional material and two way communication at a distance. 3- That intellectual pleasure and study motivation are favourable to the attainment of study goals and the use of proper study processes and methods. 4- That the atmosphere, language and conventions of friendly conversation favour feelings of personal relation. 5- That messages given and received in conversational forms are comparatively easily understood and remembered. 6- That the conversation concept can be successfully translated, for use by media available, to distance education. 7- That planning and guiding the work, whether provided by the teaching organization or the student, are necessary for organized study, which is characterized by explicit or implicit goal conceptions (Holmberg, 1995, p.47).

Learner autonomy should be the goal of distance education. It is good for the students to be self-directed, motivated and evaluative and teachers are the supporter of that process. Learner autonomy refers to be potential distance learner in participating their learning objectives, implementation of their programs study and evaluation of their learning. This view firstly reflects the main differences of distance education from traditional education. For learner autonomy, teleconferencing and local groups are important technological device.

The role of the distance educators' require to design and encourage an environment that allow for productive activities but it will be responsibility of students to make environment work for themselves. For the audio conferencing, there should be four major strategies for teacher; a- humanizing the creation of environment b- participation ensuring c- message style presenting information d- feedback getting information about effectiveness of learning and teaching. Television and computers are also tools to manage instruction by educators. What it is important in all methods that educators can use; communication techniques and obstacles should be well known to transmit the knowledge to the students. In addition to this, competence, continuity, control and confidence should be established in the sense of good coordinator of distance education. Another role of the educator is tutoring. In that sense, there is little or even no teleconferencing and real time interaction between students and teachers. The students can be assigned to personal a tutor who is usually not the person who designed course and presents the content of course. Tutors can discuss course content, providing feedback on progress, helping students plan work, motivating students, supervising projects and teaching face-to-face seminars, keeping students records, evaluating course effectiveness. These should be knowledge of tutors in media used in program. Tests and assignments are such as; student expectations were centre of the assignment and grading. Students also expect fair and objective grading, encouragement and reassurance about their ability, constructivist criticism and advice, timely response on their task grading.

In a summary; as audio conferencing, tutoring, coordinator, tests and assignments subject base; teacher as educators reflect the particular roles. When we look at the distance education student; learners are in the nature of adult learning. They need to set their objectives, self-direction, personal responsibility, personal experiences, setting decisions, learning as necessary to solve problems and being in intrinsic motivation (Moore, Kearsley,

1996).

The aim of the research is all about to control the specific roles of the teacher students on learning process by the Distance Education. As it was mentioned before, Distance learning programme provides fast, depth information, limits time, distance for learning. Everyone has also opportunity to consult the uses of this kind of education. Students become more self-realized, responsible on their training and learning. In addition to this, another study examined students' perceptions of Ohio's microwave distance education courses and compared their perceptions based various demographic variables (Isman). "The level of student satisfaction in the class was not high. More than 50% of the observational data indicated that students did not agree that they learned as much in the interactive television class," Isman discovered. The test results revealed no relationship between gender and students' perceptions, but age and college classification were found to be strongly related to their perceptions of interactive television courses. Weaker relationships were found between major and graduate / undergraduate status (Isman). On the other hand, teachers should share their wide range of knowledge with students by providing consulting, helping, directing as advisors. Distance Education is activity that embraces whole of the student activity, responsibility and willingness for getting, asking for the related questions, answers. As we know, these programmes work under the discussion, questions-answers type, and media by presenting alternatives based for getting the expansion of knowledge deeply. The main consideration is here to define and measure role effectiveness of communicators (teacher-student) on learning whatever they are apart from each other's with living the sense of Distance Education (Willis, 2002). For developing the dynamic self-concept for students, distance education is new technological power. When we concentrate on the new constructivist approach to the educational field; the roles of the educators have been changed with the implementation of new trends in education. The distance education is one of the new trends that leads students (learner) develop own strategies, objectives, evaluation, implementation by only the guidance of the teachers (Gibson, 1997).

IMPORTANCE ROLES OF STUDENT AND TEACHERS

Distance Education, or earning a degree online is a rapidly growing industry already slated to be worth billions. While many people waste countless hours surfing on the net looking at nothing more than garbage, many people are investing their time into new ways of improving their education. Many people and institutes of higher education are embracing this new revolution. When the aim of the research considered, it can be noticed that roles of teacher and students are really defined and effectiveness of them are evaluated in distance education by the related required researches. In that subject what are the roles of teachers and students in learning through distance education makes us to evaluate role and effectiveness on learning and training. Distance Education also requires professionalism on any subject training to individualism. Therefore; it supports individual learning by dealing the education with different subjects, fields to qualified people or to do qualified people.

Distance Education is the new revolution of education that eliminates distance, time and financial accounts on education. This subject requires considering on exchanging information, arguing, commending, expanding data between student and teacher for reaching stable learning. What it means that like discovery, research based education, distance learning empowers individual to act credible, useful on their self, career development. In other words, teachers should act as consulters, advisors that share wide range of knowledge, direct properly, instantly; On the other hand; students feel self-responsibility, being with the comfort of home study and easy search through internet immediately through their learning. Distance Education requires self-realization and responsibility roles of communicators in learning process.

There are a lot of researches or an article that reflect the importance of the distance education and provides alternative implementations, reflections on the roles of the students and teachers. From the reflections of the following articles or researches; there can be found exact cues or the directions to determine the roles of teacher and student in distance education.

RELATED RESEARCHES

Wilson, et al. (1991) describes the development of a distance education, professional development program for teacher education that promotes two-way communication between tutor and student through use of the telephone, electronic mail, and facsimile transmission. It is reported that in 1986, McGill University in Montreal began by offering education courses to five teachers in remote areas, with enrolment expanding to 320 by 1991. Educational computing and media courses were adapted for distance education, representing the department's first major venture in developing specific instructional materials for distance learners. Additionally, the geographical area served grew to include all of Quebec, the Northwest Territories, the Yukon, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and parts of Newfoundland and Labrador. It is noted that, although the relationship between teacher and student in distance education seems to imply a form of learning that is remote, impersonal, and indifferent, students of the McGill program praise the courses for their "human" atmosphere and the "warm" interaction they allow. It is concluded that the McGill University program is a success, and will continue to establish more substantial programs in continuing education for professionals. It is also expected that future research will find immediate application in establishing new guidelines for tutor training. The article was so important to understand the real interaction among the students and teacher with their roles.

Clark (1993) describes a study that was conducted to examine the receptivity of faculty at two-year and four-year colleges and universities to distance education. Attitudes toward distance education, the influence of previous experience with distance education and with educational media is examined, and barriers to distance education are discussed. The knowing the attitude towards distance education is important prospect to apply frequently to the education.

Garrison, Anderson (1999); In contrast to the big industrial mode of distance education, an approach to distance education called "little distance education," is described that is consistent with the traditional goals and values of creating knowledge through a critical community of learners. It discusses meeting the needs of a new market for continuing distance professional education. The effects of distance education and shortcomings of it were evaluated that this concern gives huge light to the handled thesis subject.

Levin (2001) examines distance education in postsecondary institutions, specifically in community and technical colleges in the United States, as an educational domain where information technologies have a central place. Looks at characterizing features of distance education management through a group of distance education managers and explores their role as professionals to identify what, to them, are critical issues in distance education. It is good reflection to know the management of the distance education in particular field or place in order to reflect perceptions from the management influences on the program.

Rockwell, Furgason, Marx (2000) wrote an article which was about Distance educators participated in a Delphi study to identify and rank future research and evaluation needs/issues. The study focused on planning for distance education; structuring decisions required for distance education; the implementation process; and evaluation needs in documenting outcomes. Four themes emerged: cooperation and collaboration among institutions; designing the educational experience for the distance learner; teacher preparation; and educational outcomes.

Giltrow (1997) discusses outlooks for distance education as K-12 enrollment increases in the next 10 years. Outlines distance education development needs. It notes obstacles to addressing large-scale educational problems using distance education and the necessity for a three-part analysis of America's distance education. It is important to see the alternative or negative side of the issue before asserting or investigating its effectiveness. So the article was concerned about the negative aspects of the style on education.

Merisotis (1999) discusses the Outcomes of Distance vs. Traditional Classroom-Based Learning. It was embraced that What's the difference between distance learning and

traditional classroom-based instruction? This question has become increasingly prominent as technology has made distance learning much more common. In fact, there is now at least one major Web site, maintained by North Carolina State University' s Thomas Russell, dedicated to this question. The Russell Web site (and a recently published companion book) is called The No Significant Difference Phenomenon, and compiles various articles, papers, and research studies on distance learning. The article is so important because of reflecting the two sides of the education and it evaluates the most efficient education.

Dominguez (2001) illustrated a new, parsimonious model that investigators interested in distance education can use to ask meaningful questions about the relative quality of distance education courses (Dominguez & Ridley, 1999). The approach removed the emphasis from student-level data and placed it upon course-based data. Sample data comparing online and traditional higher education courses covering nine disciplines were reported. These data revealed that preparation for advanced courses was statistically equivalent whether the course prerequisites were online courses or their traditional classroom counterparts. The article further explored the usefulness of this framework for identifying a significant discipline-related difference in the relative effectiveness of online and traditional prerequisites as preparation for advanced courses.

Jones (2000) wrote an article which was about that these Australian educators, the ongoing American debate over distance education reported in the daily press, The Chronicle, and Change, is surprising, for several reasons. Most obviously, it's surprising because the essential debate is long over in Australia. Respected Australian universities have been awarding indistinguishable degrees to on-campus and off-campus students for decades. Nearly 14 percent of university students study at a distance. When we look, as Australians still occasionally do, toward Britain, we see Open University degrees recognized as representing a rigorous, thorough British education. And article was so important to see the alternative view on distance educational disciplines and give light to the thesis as references.

As a conclusion of the above the article reviews or research, there are a lot of thoughts that go around the concept of the Distance Education. The articles concentrated on the definition of the distance education and high degree relation with the information technology, Internet based access in education. According to these ordered, huge and alternative point of views about the distance education, they give the proper base to search on the concrete roles of teacher and students in distance education with selecting base line on the exact reflective roles of the teachers and students in the new style of the education whatever there are different management perceptions, models and communicational barriers.

These handled articles and research findings reflect the approximate findings and comments on the roles of the students and teachers in Distance Education.

FINDINGS AND COMMENTS

Distance Education requires individualistic learning process that learner can reach knowledge from the computer-assisted programs. With the development of the high technology, people look for fast, easy, no time, space extension education opportunities to catch educational standards based on the global worldwide. Distance Education comes to today's' education view as an alternative. Through the distance education, roles of the students and teachers are the main considerations with the parallel thinks with the classical education standards. It is assumed that Internet based technology have great power on permanent learning, education can be easier than classical learning through distance education by emphasizing self-learning than teaching, self- responsibility should be occurred whatever there is distance and there is no face to face communication. Distance Education regards particular fee, Distance Education automatically creates concrete rules and roles for communicators.

According to research findings on the roles of the students' in distance education are;

1. Being self-responsible on task
2. Consulting to advisors through required access methods
3. Being in individualistic learning
4. Catching same effective interaction with counselors like classical learning
5. Evaluating and judging self-performance
6. Getting rid of prejudice of communicational barriers mood

According to research findings on the roles of the teachers' in distance education are;
1. Being self-responsible for the preparation of task
2. Immediately consult to the students on their problems on task
3. Being aware of students' needs and wishes
4. Making students motivated
5. Getting rid of prejudice of communicational barriers mood
6. Establishing effective student-teacher interaction environment

Research provided us to overlook effectiveness of the learning whatever there is no face to face communication among the communicators and how these roles are defined and affected by the learning process. According to findings and comments of the research, it can be carried to the conclusion that students and teachers reflect their roles as self-responsible, individualistic communicators and self-evaluators on their actual performance that can come up with some kind of communicational barriers.

Learning in high technological, global world presents many roles and responsibilities for both teacher and learner. In addition to this; there is a radical change in construction and delivery of course content. The use of interaction between and among learners, teachers, content promises to increase opportunities and experience of deep and meaningful learning (Gibson, 1997). There should be constructivist transaction between learning teaching that student-teacher roles are so important in distance education. Isman (1999) requires constructivist approach on learning for being interactive within teaching learning transaction. Constructivist approach also relate with self-development of students beside the learning and teaching activities. Students should search and design their activities with their self-experiences on the subject and construct all activities under the sense of evaluation (Isman, 1999). In the constructivist approach, student is the centre of the instruction to be an active role in learning by the support of the technology. For making learning easy and making learning products permanent, technology is the main concern. Technology requires increasing the attention of the students to the subjects and enhancing motivational cues, helping to remember the subjects. Constructivist Approach that includes the technology support, requires learning by doing philosophy of learning for students. The technology, self development of students and learning by searching through the technological implementation carry us to think constructivist approach as a part of the distance education.

The constructivist approach required roles of teacher and students that are represented and these roles could be applied to the roles of the students and teachers interaction in distance education process.

Teacher Role in Distance Education based on Constructivist Approach;

1. Teacher should be in consciousness of learner autonomy. Teachers should inform be aware of the individual differences of them.

2. Teacher should use real and current information to transmit knowledge. In other words, teacher should be well educated and on going researcher in order to reflect information and give concrete update examples and summarizes about subjects for the permanent learning of the students.

3. Teachers should give the importance of thoughts of students. They should posses the research environment to the students in order to search and evaluate their experiences on content under the sense of self-regulation.

4. Teachers should be aware on the individual differences of the students and

design course materials based on this consciousness.

5. Teachers should know the students prerequisite skills on the content to build new knowledge construction. In addition to this; teacher should know the how learner can learn based on strategies.

6. Teachers are the main communicators to establish interaction between the teacher and students. Teacher should have technological, communicational skills to implement distance education effectively.

7. Teachers should implement the courses based on the student centred learning process. Students should feel the responsibility of learning and consult to teacher. Therefore; teacher should provide concrete time, place and opportunities of interaction.

8. Teachers should help the self-development and responsibility of the students with their guidance.

9. Teachers should provide the environment of collaborative learning, interactive discussion groups for the easy and permanent learning of students with related materials.

10. Teachers should give the proper feedback to the students and help them to interrelate the subjects. In addition to this; teachers should guide for finding the fields of the students.

Student Role in Distance Education based on Constructivist Approach;

1. Students should be in interaction between teacher in order to get proper feedback on their self-directed subjects and consult to teacher for correctness and evaluation. Students can be in collaborative learning with their class members through the technological support.

2. Students are self-responsible on their learning. They should decide what they want to learn and make individual study on their subject.

3. Students should come to the solutions for problems with data through the research instead of implementing available data. Therefore they should be researcher.

4. Students should be problem solver. They should implement what they learn on problems and set solutions strategies with using relevance information.

5. Students should be well informed from the technology to not face with communicational barriers because of technology. In addition to this; they should use technology to construct the learning with rich materials.

6. Students should be learners through the life. The students should know how to access and use the information whatever the instruction was finished. They should reach the information immediately if it is necessary.

Under the constructivist approach; the roles of student and teacher were determined above. These roles should be in the consciousness of communicators to develop effective distance education process out of interaction difficulties (Isman, 1999). All sorts of approximations reflect that roles of teachers and students are common on being self-responsible, self-evaluator, and individualistic communicators as being active position on their proper roles. Distance Education reflects their roles based on instructing computer assisted, programs that create communicational problems on understanding and accessing. Whatever communicational barriers can be reflected as limitation in findings, distance education create home-atmosphere learning, lecturing, eliminating time, distance, increase self-responsibility and evaluation for self development, reflect global high technological benefits to all humanity and educational fields.

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