

THE BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF USING WEBINARS IN EDUCATION



<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6653327>

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ABSTRACT

The article makes an analysis of webinar technologies in education. The advantages and disadvantages of implementing online technologies like webinars in education are given in the article.

Keywords: *webinar, information technology, distance learning, platform, E-learning, cyberpedagogy*

АННОТАЦИЯ

В статье проводится анализ вебинарных технологий в образовании. В статье приведены преимущества и недостатки внедрения онлайн-технологий, таких как вебинары в образовании.

Ключевые слова: *вебинар, информационные технологии, дистанционное обучение, платформа, электронное обучение, киберпедагогика*

INTRODUCTION

The emergency situation in which the whole world found itself in connection with the COVID-19 virus pandemic has led to the urgent need to transfer employees to remote work in many areas. The education also required a transition to online mode. Schools and universities that sent their students to quarantine do not have the opportunity to postpone the educational process for a long period. At the same time, many institutions of secondary and higher education were not quite ready for the abrupt onset of the era of cyberpedagogy [9, 134]. The main IT tools used during online education was a webinar.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

A webinar is a technology for transmitting audio and video information by means of the Internet in real time. Unlike a web conference, a webinar has one main speaker, and the communication of other participants is more often carried out through text messages. Webinar - a seminar held on the Internet in real time. Thus,

the webinar serves to transfer knowledge and virtually unites people located in different parts of space [7, 113].

The technology allows the presenter to show presentations, show the desktop of his computer, provide participants with access to educational materials in electronic form, conduct surveys and tests. Usually, during the webinar, a recording is made, to which listeners are given access for re-viewing.

In order to take part in a webinar, the topic of which is of interest, you first need to register. After registration, you will receive a web link to a page through which you can go to the webinar during it. As a participant, you do not need any special software. All interactions are carried out through a web browser, in order to hear sound, you need to connect headphones or a speaker system to your computer. When working with a mobile application to view a webinar, a mobile phone (smartphone) and broadband Internet access are enough.

If you want the presenter and other participants to be able to see you and hear your comments, you will need a webcam and a microphone when working through a personal computer, these devices are already available on a mobile phone (smartphone).

The opportunities provided by the webinar to its participants are as follows [10, 300]:

- view slide presentations;
- the ability to see the presenter in real time;
- audio communication through a computer (mobile phone) in real time;
- recording an online seminar and its subsequent viewing;
- an electronic board on which the presenter and listeners can leave their comments; – text chat for the exchange of information between the presenter and participants and for communication between participants;
- conducting voting and polls, when the host presents several answers to choose from and each participant marks the option that he considers the most appropriate.

Let’s consider the possibilities of using modern platforms for conducting webinars from a pedagogical point of view, their advantages and disadvantages.

As a rule, all modern webinar platforms are equipped with the same basic tools: desktop demonstration, some running applications, presentations, videos, conducting surveys, creation of group and private chats, opportunity to see the speaker, videoconferencing, monitoring the presence of participants, drawing board. Advanced features include the following: invitations, participation via mobile devices, advanced reporting for webinars, the ability to embed registration forms.

What are the advantages of using a webinar in the educational process?

To begin with, we need to differentiate advantages and disadvantages for both sides, for teachers and for students.

Here are some advantages for students. Firstly, the listeners have the opportunity to hold an online meeting, being in modern different places.

The second significant advantage is the absence of travel costs to the venue (not to mention traffic jams, due to which offline seminar participants may be delayed, late and miss a layer of valuable information) and time saving. The student himself can determine the conditions of training, choosing the most comfortable room and equipment.

The third advantage is the ability to revisit and access materials. Remote listeners are provided with a video recording of the webinar, which allows them to repeat the studied material many times at a pace convenient for the listener.

Also, if we consider a webinar as one of the means of working with distance learning students, then it is worth emphasizing the fact that the impersonality of students disappears, there is an element of communication in real time.

The main advantages of using webinar technology for the teacher [1, 86]:

- the possibility to organize a lesson at home, being with a family. It gives the opportunity to women, who has a family to care about their family and at the same time to earn money;

- the ability to reach a large audience, not limited by the capacity of the premises and the remoteness of the trainees;

- the ability to automate the process of knowledge assessment through computer technology;

The main disadvantages of learning using webinar technology for the students [9, 137]:

- the teacher must have sufficient skills in the field of information technology to independently organize connection to the webinar;

- in many areas, the responsibility for the motivation of educational activity is shifted to the student.

The main disadvantages of teaching using webinar technology for the teachers:

- the teacher must have the skills to work with specific software for conducting a webinar. Responsibility for the quality of the broadcast and recording of the webinar lies partly with the teacher;

- the teacher cannot constantly control the assimilation of educational material by remote students, since there is no visual contact with them, the audience sees the

lecturer, but the lecturer does not have the opportunity to establish visual contact with his audience, in particular, when the audience is larger than 5-10 people;

- in a mixed group, where there are both face-to-face and remote students, the teacher is forced to constantly switch attention between these two audiences. Since distance students usually ask questions in the form of text messages, the teacher has to periodically check for the presence of these messages. Sometimes some time passes between the question asked and the answer to it, and the answer may no longer be so relevant;

- in a mixed group, the teacher must ensure that everything that happens in the classroom is understandable to the audience of the webinar, duplicating the questions of face-to-face listeners (as they may not be heard), describing their actions if there is no video broadcast from the audience, and using an electronic board, and not usual for notes and explanations;

- with a large number of correspondence students, a large flow of questions is possible, to which the teacher will not have time to answer.

- difficulty to control the presence of a student at a lecture, he can simply turn on the computer and leave the lesson.

In theoretical courses, questions could be answered at the end of the webinar, but in practical courses, a response not received on time may lead to the impossibility of further completion of the assignment.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Thus, conducting distance learning using webinar technology is associated with a number of advantages and disadvantages from the point of view of the learner and the teacher. Most of the difficulties in such learning are related to motivation, coordination and control of learning activities. Recommendations for overcoming the shortcomings of training using webinars differ depending on the form of training: individual, group, public-mass or mixed. For individual learning, personalization of learning materials and visual contact through video communication become an important factor.

For large groups, on the contrary, it is better to use universal examples, to provide for the automation of coordination and control of the educational process. Questions of the methodology of automated coordination and control of learning, as well as increasing the involvement of remote learners in the learning process require additional study.

Online webinars have some difficulties in conducting remote work for the teacher. It is difficult to control the presence of a student at a lecture, he can simply turn on the computer and leave the lesson. It is difficult to consider how well the students have learned the material, since there is no way to see the reaction of the listeners, there is no visual contact. After the seminar, it is desirable to conduct a test, a survey of students about how they evaluate the results of training. You can use the distribution of questionnaires to improve the quality of the courses. Certain statistics about the success of the seminar can be obtained by noting the attendance of participants in each subsequent course.

We must proceed from the fact that the need for distance learning is not limited to the period of quarantine and self-isolation. The irreversible effects of the pandemic on the global economy lead to a lot of activity in the field of employment. Businesses are reviewing budgets and cutting costs. In such a situation, a wave of cuts is inevitable.

On the one hand, in the first place, budget cuts in companies fall under the item of expenditure on training. On the other hand, employees who keep their jobs are forced to take on additional responsibilities. It is necessary to improve their skills as soon as possible.

The economic consequences affected all enterprises of individual industries. It is difficult for laid-off employees who have entered the labor market in large numbers to find work in another enterprise in the same industry. Many will have to upgrade their skills and retrain. At the same time, personal budgets for education have also been cut.

In this regard, distance technologies, the use of which often makes education cheaper, faster and easier to organize, should come to the fore in the modern era. The questions of the practical organization of cyber-education and the continuation of the development of the methodology of cyber pedagogy become topical [2; 6], training teachers for the use of information technology in teaching in general and in organizing distance learning in particular.

Thus, the use of webinars in the modern educational process has its advantages: low cost and high learning efficiency.

Currently, this Internet technology is being introduced as a resource for distance education or self-education. The number of teachers and students who have learned about what a webinar is appreciate the advantages of distance online education.

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