



Online Learning Toward Digital Generation at Tien Giang University Opportunities and Challenges

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Opportunities and challenges

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Abstract

Placing learners at the centre of teaching is the target of many universities, including Tien Giang University. This campus constantly improves and innovates teaching and learning methods. In particular, the online teaching method by using E-learning platform has been thoroughly grasping. E-learning is a teaching method that complements the traditional teaching method, helps to develop the digital skills of lecturers and students and contributes to the innovation of assessment methods and capacity development self-study, self-study. The students can learn anytime, anywhere in the context of the ongoing Covid-19 epidemic if the universities apply the online teaching. However, online teaching method by using E-learning platform at Tien Giang university is still quite new to the lecturers as well as the students. Through this article, the author analyzes the opportunities and challenges in online teaching and learning at this school, thereby proposing some solutions to improve the quality of online teaching at Tien Giang University.

Keywords: Online teaching, opportunities and challenges, solutions, digital generation, Tien Giang University.

INTRODUCTION

The digital generation 4.0 is a revolution which the action of manufacture does not need the act of human and especially it brings many great achievements for the outstanding development in humanity, besides of these great fulfillments, the digital revolution also gives some challenges for many aspects including education. This inherent of revolution has been utilizing a lots of modern equipments in order to enhance the quality of human life both physically and mentally, in addition to improving the method of transmitting knowledge to people. To response these requirements of this revolution, Vietnamese educators are constantly trying to change the method of knowledge transmission, thus, learners must change their thinking, improve their own abilities with the aim is to be able to keep up with developments and work in the 4.0 technology environment. Curriculum amendment and change of teaching method are suitable for the social development during this period which become an essential duty toward universities and the whole education in generally. The emphasis on the central role of learners has being applied by many universities including Tien Giang University, and the implementation of technology toward distance education is also thoroughly understood by this campus. In which, the utilization of mobile learning has been adopted at Tien Giang University. However, due to a new teaching method, many teachers have many obstacles for accessing and using it effectively.

II. CONTENT

2.1 The definition of E-learning

E-Learning (Electronic Learning) or online learning is a concept used to describe learning and training based on information and communication technology. Currently, there are many different views on this term, specifically as follows:

- According to the study of William Horton (2003), he stated that E-Learning has been utilized of Web and Internet technologies in learning.

- Another definition of Sun Microsystems "E-learning and training online is a process of exchanging and communication process knowledge which is distributed and supported through an information technology application environment including Internet, digital television and computer teaching based on based on mail correspondence technologies, with advances in technology which has continued with the use of pre-recorded media.

- Distance education is a learning support system that applies technology through the utilization of web browsers as a primary means of interaction between learners each other and specially between students and teachers (Vu Quoc Thong, 2018). E-learning creates the best conditions for learners to acquire actively knowledge through teaching and learning based on via the Internet.

- E-Learning is the transmission of knowledge from textbooks, electronic lectures, tests by using electronic equipments including computers, the Internet, satellite networks, etc., throughout computers or TV, thereby, teachers and students can communicate with each other using via the network such as e-mail, online discussion (chat), forum ((Lê Thị Thanh Trà, 2018). These days, mobile education has become the crucial selection for educational development in the 4.0 generation, particularly in the digital era that will bring key factors with the aim is to promote online training activities (Scott Winstead, 2016).

2.2 Online education in learning and teaching at Tien Giang University

Recently, E-learning has already widely applied at many universities in Vietnam including Tien Giang University. Specifically, according to 369 Decision issued on September 29th, 2020, Headmaster has been promulgated regulations on the use of online teaching and learning management systems in training activities at the University.¹ In this enactment, schoolmasters emphasized the outstanding role of E-learning in credit training including expanding learning opportunities for learners in which they cannot attend school to participate in learning, and supplementing teaching methods effectively. In addition, principal's decision also encouraged the development of digital skills of lecturers and learners, thereby, creating opportunities for lecturers and students access advantageous Internet resources for the learning process. In addition, this decision has also emphasized the improvement of the capacity to adopt some new information technologies in distance education with the aim is to contribute the innovation of teaching and learning methods, testing and assessment, developing the capacity for self-study, research and meet learners' learning needs anytime and anywhere, thereby, shorten training time, take advantage of online teaching and learning methods in higher education, contribute to promoting digital transformation in education and training.

2.3 Opportunities of mobile education

Nowadays, E-learning is no longer a new definition in the world; however, in Vietnam, its function and how to use it still brings many challenges for both teachers and learners.

a. Toward lecturers

¹ http://dhtg.vpdttg.vn/Vanban/XuLyDiCV_ChiTiet.aspx?t=3&m=30767

- *Various teaching facilities and multifarious learning materials:* It is clearly that it is no matter for searching materials and teaching methods in order to teach students which has been become easily in this 4.0 revolution. In teaching, the adaptation of modern teaching methods and various materials that figure out students' passion with the aim to pursue patiently their learning process. Together with the development of digital technologies aimed at offering distance courses, new educational opportunities such as open educational resources and massive open online courses emerged for larger masses to access education (Saykılı, 2018). Obviously, with the development of E-learning, teachers can integrate illustrations into lectures, multimedia effects including sound, animation effects, thereby, increasing interaction between students with teachers or students together throughout online conversations, besides of contributing to improve the quality of lecturer's lectures and students' learning capacity.

- *Improving teachers' using IT capacity:* The rise of internet has brought out the concept of electronic learning by changing the mode of delivery of learning and knowledge (Mahmud, 2010), as a result, teachers must try their best to use it in the teaching process. Actually, teachers only need to use minimal technological techniques such as Microsoft Word or design their lectures by using Powerpoint when they taught some traditional methods. However, online teaching has become a mandatory requirement for a number of reasons such as accessing learning and education, updating skill development, increasing cost effectiveness, increasing the quality of educational structure, improving the capacity of the system of education, therefore, how to acquire them. In these days, it plays an essential role to improve the quality of education. Clearly, lecturers sometimes encounter obstacles and problems in technology integration, for example, students can't access the system or can't participate in the test, how to compose test questions, or answer students' questions when they have some problems, even how to let students in class or not? E-learning has been clearly created outstanding opportunities for lecturers to improve their ability to use technology.

- *Limitations of travel distance time:* Reality, teachers must be on time to their class when teaching directly, so their travel process must be quickly. Nevertheless, online education has been expanding the capacity of education in new subject areas, associating working and family life with education. In addition, electronic learning helps teachers to save their travel distance time, limiting environmental pollution or problems with traffic jams, heat or traffic accidents. Thanks to limited transportability, teachers have much more time to prepare for their lessons and especially they can save a lot of money.

b. Toward learners

- *Emphasizing the importance of learners:* compared to previous revolutions, the primary of 4.0 revolution has been emphasized the central role of individuals, focused on maximizing the essential role of learners, thereby, they can learn at any time, any place, and thanks to the effective assistant of technological tools, specifically is E-learning. Learners can master the learning process through searching various materials, knowledge or even selecting teachers who has good teaching skills. In addition, they have a right to demonstrate their knowledge by participating in discussion forums directly with lecturers or friends. Besides, students can learn actively and discuss anytime and anywhere, particularly they are able to attend massive open online courses around the world with the support of technological equipments.

- *Actively all time for the learning process:* Nowadays, the importance of flexible

learning has been emphasized by many educational institutions including Tien Giang University. Evidently, this is a process which learners are able to adjust actively the learning procedure, and choose the learning way that is the best suitable for their circumstances. Educational institutions always design curriculums based on the learners' active spirit with the aim is to help them to manage their time effectively and have flexible study. In addition, learners can easily choose majors that are suitable for their abilities because of miscellaneous knowledge from basic to specialized, all of areas such as social and natural.

- *Active learning material searching*: this is also the outstanding advantage of E-learning. With a variety of tools and resources always available, distance education contributes increased options for the personalization of learning. For example, mobile learning in classrooms often has students working interdependently, in groups, or individually to solve problems, to work on projects, to meet individual needs, and to allow for student voice and choice. (Yousef Mehdipour, 2013). In addition to these benefits, learners can easily find various learning materials without limiting to Vietnamese versions only but also expanding to any languages which they have mastered.

2.4 Challenges of mobile education

Electronic learning is emerging as one of the solutions to the disadvantages faced by education in the Covid-19 pandemic, however this online method also has been brought some follow challenges:

a. Toward lecturers

- Not being ready psychology for online teaching has become the fear of teachers. Due to their age, capacity of using these technological devices or traditional teaching habits, as a result, old teachers are not ready for online education. Typically, the fear of being in front of the camera, or some apprehensions about saying wrong something is difficult to correct like when teaching in class, etc., these reasons have become a challenge that makes E-learning has not been developed effectively in educational institutions.

- In term of keeping connected with students, this is the biggest problem in online teaching. If this obstacle does not solve, students will easily get bored or even not participate in a class discussions and interactions with each other. This challenge involves many factors in which student autonomy is one of the great concern. In face-to-face classes, students are used to observing the lecturer through words, gestures, etc, however in the E-learning course, students are easily lack of concentration or surfed Facebook or even being gossip with their friends. Thus, they have not been paying too much attention to the teacher's lessons.

- Another important challenge is the objectivity of the quizzes, or tests because E-learning uses technology on the online learning platform, so cheating in the tests has been become the biggest difficulty to control. Nevertheless, distance education has the best solution during this Covid-19 pandemic.

b. Toward learners

- Most of Tien Giang University's students come from rural areas, or small cities, therefore these obstacles of upgrading information technology is still limited, furthermore, E-learning is a new approach applied in education during this period, so some difficult situations including can't register into the computer or applications on smartphones, or it takes a long time to log into the online class. The second challenge is that some technical

problems has been happened during the learning process such as network connection, not being able to listen to lectures.

- Regard to specialist areas, many definitions should be explained clearly to students, however E-learning which is difficult to control because of the transmission line, a large class, the sound quality of the lecturer and other students together. In addition to these difficulties, teachers often spend a fewer hour in order to clarify these definitions very clear because of limitations of time for teachers' lessons.

2.5 Some solutions to improve the quality of education at Tien Giang University

In the early of the digital 4.0 revolution, there are many opportunities which have been created for a lot of areas in our society and education has also been significantly affected by this technological generation. Therefore, education needs to show the essential role in this period due to the importance of education is to train well-skilled workers who is the key to survival in this era integer digitization. E-learning is the process by which the wisdom, knowledge and skills of one generation are passed on to the next. Apparently, online training is a bright spot of the education industry for adapting to international changes and creating a highly qualified human resources.

Therefore, many solutions with the aim is to improve the quality of E-learning are interested by many educational institutions including Tien Giang University. These solutions are specifically highlighted as follows:

a. Toward lecturers

- It should be emphasized that besides of professional technique and active teaching methods, digital technological skills are outstanding as one of the important requirements of online teaching. This cleverness comprises distance teaching methods, answers students' questions anywhere and anytime about the reasons for without logging into the software, or not being able to access online classes, organizes students how to do group assignments, or tests, thus, teachers must have the capacity to interact or connect with students. Accordingly, lecturers had better practice their ability how to use fluently technology devices, and understand some managements of online courses about its utilizations and particularly in limitations. Apparently, in the early stages of the digital revolution, teachers who as a creator of human resources contributing to social development, always improve and practice these skills which is a compulsory solicitation of online teaching. Furthermore, teachers should be trained and enlightened in the E-learning system in order to help them practice and adopt new approach in the course that they have been teaching, thereby helping them improve their ability to use E-learning effectively, and using technology, designing lessons, organizing students to participate in their classes and evaluating students through learning activities based on E-learning smoothly.

- Another requirement of lecturers has a massive information and practical experience how to answer the most questions of learners - even these questions outside of the teaching content, thus, it always obligates lecturers to upgrade social knowledge that must be erudite to be able to guide and exploit students' critical thinking. Different from directly classrooms, E-learning creates a vibrant learning environment because it encourages all learners to participate in discussion forums in which students always boldly express themselves, especially learners' view has become personalized. If the lecturer does not enlighten all students' problems, it is easy to lead to discouragement in the class. When

attending an online teaching, teachers go along with creating a dynamic learning environment by encouraging students to participate as much as possible in the interaction between students and students, especially students and teachers. Simultaneously, lecturers had better focus attention how to achieve the goal of the courses, thereby, students always participate actively and search for appropriate learning materials, in addition to applying the knowledge in real situations. Finally, teachers need to create diverse activities to response all of students' learning requirements. It should be emphasized that some specialist areas with concepts or formulas, teachers must spend much more time on concepts that accompanied by examples or illustrative exercises so that students can acquire them deeply. In addition to these attentions, teachers need to increase upload exercises on the E-learning system in which students can solve them during self-study.

- Besides the mentioned above solutions, the objectivity of tests or exams should be increased and it is also a hotly-debated issue of online education. To solve this problem, teachers need to create various forms of tests or quizzes including multiple-choice, True/False form, closed-up tests, or even fill a blank, besides of these tests, they should supplement with oral test, seminar, or group discussion. When defeating this difficulty, teachers will limit some students' cheat such as copying each other's results, or discussing on the hour test, thereby, learners can focus on the topics and content of the lesson which the lecturer has taught to evaluate students. In addition to these barriers, the totally number of questions in the exam or test, mixed answers E-learning final test should be expanded by teachers with the aim is limit learners' deception and the quality of examinations will be better.

b. Toward learners

- E-learning plays an emerge position during the Covid -19 pandemic, thus, it requires learners to be active in the learning process, as a result learners' self-study spirit is a vital obligation. This method can help learners choose exactly something like materials, lecturers, classes. Obviously, if there is no high spirit of initiative, the learning process is not effective, even easy to get a boredom. At Tien Giang University, learners have been always interested and reminded by lecturers including participating in courses, tests or group exercises, especially they have been also training in this method before logging into the system, however, the spirit of learning depends on learners' practice daily. Apparently, in addition to these assist of the schoolmasters and teachers, learners must be an autonomous factor and bring the highest results in the E-learning education.

- Using digital devices and acquisition foreign languages play a decisive role to join an online course. When joining an online class, the whole learning materials are not only limited to Vietnamese versions but will be also extended to foreign websites and documents. Therefore, improving and practicing these two skills play an indispensable requirement when studying up online courses (Le Thi My An, 2018). Besides of these notices, developing critical thinking also should be paid attention and practice by students every day, because E-learning has been required learners to participate regularly in discussion activities or exchange directly knowledge with lecturers. Evidently, if students do not participate any discussion term, it will easily lead to depression when participating in these online courses.

c. Toward educational institutions

- In order for highly effective online courses, many educational institutions or even Tien Giang University should pay attention to improving the quality of the infrastructure

system such as wifi access or computer system to serve the needs of students. These improvements will service for learners' online learning that is getting better. Sometimes, teaching or learning based on E-Learning platform has been interrupted by quite objective reasons such as transmission lines, audio errors, file errors, unclear courses which students unable to log into some classes, or even may not be able to find courses, exams, discussion forums. Therefore, Headmasters of TGU should focus on upgrading these facilities to make students' learning more effective and teachers have a strong passion to overcome their fear about online teaching. In addition to these solutions, some support teams also need to be paid attention in teaching and learning based on the E-learning system. Support from this force plays a massive role to solve some problems when teaching online, especially technical problems. Thus, this school had better pay attention to improving these professional qualifications of this force in order to make the system's operation process more efficient.

3. Conclusion

Mobile education has been equipping teachers with advanced digital tools during the 4.0 technological revolution and especially responding to the complicated situation of the Covid-19 pandemic. Simultaneously, this method helps learners become an active students including research, searching learning materials with any languages which they have mastered. However, the ability using information technology, and traditional teaching habits have been affected teaching style deeply, thereby, lecturers are not ready for online teaching, no interaction with students in which should be created a boredom classes. In addition to these obstacles, students only have access to theoretical knowledge, lack of practical knowledge. To defeat these problems of Electronic learning at Tien Giang University, lecturers and students need to equip themselves with information technology knowledge; lecturers should check and encourage their students to participate in the course, actively share learners' difficulties, and especially they had better create the best interaction with the lecturer, thus, many lessons will be interested and more attractive. At the same time, technical support teams play a massive duty to improve the quality of E-learning and defeat some errors of logging into the system, so this force also need to be strengthened.

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