

Marco Pérez  
*A perspective on distance  
learning and adult education  
in Latin America and the  
Caribbean*

During the second half of the last century, different types of flexible and adaptable educational methods have appeared in response to new social needs. Among the alternatives are the non-formal educational models that together with mass communication media have lead to distance learning. This article analyzes a variety of institutions working in distance learning, emphasizing its development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The main difficulties met with by this model in the region are also analyzed and discussed, among which are the lack of credibility, the scarcity of financial resources, the lack of understanding of independent learning, the shortage of qualified teachers, and the absence of educational policies leading to the development of this model. As for the future of distance learning in the region, the trend towards taking advantage of the new technologies for adult education in distance or mixed programs is noted.

Cesáreo Morales  
*A transcultural point of view  
of distance learning*

The globalization of distance learning is leading to an intense exchange of educational services among different countries and cultures. The author undertakes the ethical implications of cooperation among higher education institutions of different cultural and linguistic environments, especially between American or Canadian institutions and Latin American ones. Three aspects are analyzed: first, language, which must be approached from the perspective of transcultural equivalence; second, the technology, since there is a wide gap among the regions as to the access to these resources. A third aspect relates to cultural differences and the economic and social inequalities among countries and regions.

Verónica Nespereira  
*Printed materials in distance  
learning programs.  
An opportunity to teach  
how to think and learn*

This article describes the adopted methodology for the production of printed materials designed by the Ministry of Education of the province of Buenos Aires taking into consideration the particular importance of educational materials in distance programs (which are the fundamental support and educational medium among adult students) as well as learning abilities and attitudes expected to be attained. The purpose of this project was to satisfy the needs of adults that had not finished the middle educational level, and were participating in the unemployment subsidies program of the Ministry

of Labor. The materials focused on two types of activities: those for the development of thinking abilities, and those for the development of knowledge acquisition strategies. Both types are described.

Friné López & Laura Frade  
*Distance learning courses  
of the Red Nacional  
Milenio Feminista*

Networks of civil organizations frequently face several obstacles in attaining their goal of creating spaces for presential training and feedback due to the scarcity of financial resources and to the work load of their staff. The authors describe a distance learning experience with personnel from Mexican NGOs, basically women, whose purpose was the development of abilities for the analysis and formulation of proposals in order to influence, negotiate and exert political pressure related to macroeconomics, economic governance, and development sustainability, from the perspective of gender. Various results are presented, such as the development of the participants abilities in virtual learning tools and the opening up of new communication channels, such as the web site.

Jorge Méndez Martínez  
*Instructional and strategic  
tools for distance learning  
tutorship*

Far from disappearing, the distance learning tutor or guide has an essential importance. Thus, the training process of educators, and the new tasks and functions they are to perform must be attended. The author describes the tasks (academic and tutorship roles) and the tutor's role in distance learning. He also defines the applicable tools of this educational model, unidirectional or bi-directional, depending on the communication flow, and synchronic or asynchronic, depending on the moment in which the communication is carried out. In another section, the characteristics of the curricula and the teaching strategies are described, as well as the possible combinations among them.

Leesa Kaplan  
*Application of successful  
strategies in adult distance  
learning*

Based on her wide experience in research as well as in her educational practice in El Salvador and Bolivia, the author systematized the characteristics related to success in adult education programs, and subsequently she applied her findings to distance learning. From this experience, nine recommendations are drawn, referring to various aspects that are involved in the educational process. Among them, the importance of taking into account the needs, the cultural contexts and the students' learning styles, as well as the design of methodologies and contents to encourage interaction and responsibility on the self-learning process.

Fabio J. Chacón  
*The assessment process  
in interactive and open  
learning systems*

We are in the midst of a boom in interactive learning systems, whether in individualized or collaborative modalities. However, the systematization of evaluation concepts related to these ways of learning has been neglected. In general, programmed education and

traditional distance learning ideas have been adopted without previous analysis or reflection. The new assessment models to be designed for interactive and open learning systems should be based upon the self-learning process, and the principles of authenticity, aperture, and globalization. This article describes some ways to assess individual interactive and collective courses, based on a previous description of the characteristics of each type of assignment.

Haydée I. Nieto, Oscar de Majo & Soledad Alén  
*The distance learning of Spanish language for foreigners*

The authors describe an experience in the Universidad del Salvador, Argentina, related to the development of a distance learning program of Spanish language for foreigners. This work is based upon the recognition that there is a close relationship between language teaching and the culture from which it originates. Thus, the program is not limited to Spanish language teaching, but it also promotes the Argentinean Río de la Plata culture. Readers are invited to know more about the Spanish language program taught for foreigners through a demo in the Internet.

Alicia Buquet  
*Middle education level teacher's training in semi-presential modality: Uruguay's experience*

This article describes a middle education level teachers' training program in a "semi-presential" modality, offering professional opportunities to youths and adults in Uruguay. The program is intended to assist teachers to spread-out across the country without having to leave their hometowns. The author describes the steps carried out in research, management, and the integration of the working staff for the operation of the program, as well as the way this new educational program was integrated into the Uruguayan "Instituto de Formación Docente".

Jaime Sarramona  
*Communication in distance learning*

Communication plays a fundamental role in every educational process. Indeed, through this factor it is possible to reduce or eliminate the distance between teacher and student, so as to achieve a dialogue. This article approaches the communication problem in distance learning. The purpose is to search for interaction, or a two-way communication route, that is, "open and straightforward" interpersonal communication. Following this approach, two types of interaction involving the distance learning process are characterized: the communication between teacher and student and among the students themselves; and, on the other hand, the interaction between the students and the teaching material.