

SESSION 1
Information Systems and Networks Technologies

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**CONCEPT OF E-LEARNING 2.0 AS REALIZATION OF
WEB 2.0 IDEOLOGY IN DISTANT LEARNING**

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*This article is dedicated to the concept of e-learning 2.0 as realization of web 2.0 ideology in distant learning.
There are different definitions of the Web 2.0 and the using the concept of Web 2.0 in distance learning.*

Keywords – computer science, distance learning, Web 2.0, e-learning .

Recently a lot of Internet personalities have started discussing appearance of new concept of Internet development, i.e. Web 2.0.

The term Web 2.0 was used before, but it came up in its modern sense at the conference dedicated to Web 2.0 (<http://www.web2con.com>) held in October of 2004. The results of the conference allowed Tim O’Railey to write the first and still the most popular article on Web 2.0 which was the first to demonstrate differences between the networks of the first and the second generations.

Web 2.0 concept ideologists with its motto “Web As Platform” define several key moments for differentiating between “the old Web” and “the new, second Web”.

The most essential and evident meaning of the phrase “Web As Platform” implies changing work principles of common software products. Widespread use of special interfaces leads to common applications working via browser. It means that every person can work exclusively with web-applications – online word processor, spreadsheets, organizer, bookmark service, file storage tools, listening to music. As a result, complete mobility of a user is achieved; one can have the network access and work with the network like a common computer with installed applications. In this case all applications will be accessible via browser while a user needs operational system, browser and the Internet access only.

In principle, the existing Web 2.0 products can hardly be compared to classical desktop applications, though some Web 2.0 sites have achieved the level of the commonly used programs at least in speed and sometimes even exceed it functionality.

The founders of Web 2.0 concept also draw attention to rearrangement of prior roles of content creator and its user. Such duties arrangement in Web 2.0 is gradually being obliterated, and content users, i.e. Internet users gradually become plenipotentiary participants of the process of its creation. In his article O’Railey tells about technologies reinforcement due to collective intelligence.

Another significant characteristic of Web 2.0 network has been use of blogs as competitors of traditional mass media. Blog sphere is a vivid example of both collective intelligence and particular individuality brought in by each blogger. Civil journalism, that is what they call blog sphere, has been competing with traditional journalism lately. The competition shows that quite often blogs are more reliable and topical source of information compared to traditional media.

Besides, Web 2.0 ideologists name some other distinctive features of “the second Web’. AJAX technology is one of them thanks to which cooperation between user and web-application is quite quickly accomplished. The first successful example of AJAX use is Google gmail.com, at present plenty of Web-projects use AJAX.

Besides, rss-bands and subcasting technologies are called Web 2.0 tools as well.

Meaning of the term Web 2.0 is still quite disputable. Opponents claim that Web 2.0 fashion is just a marketing gimmick, and the most radical adversaries of Web 2.0 existence are having talks of Web 3.0. If we look deeper, we will see that there is a clear difference between the concepts of “the old” and “the new” web – the new one has more flexibility and interface dynamics, as well as data management tools, for instance with use of folksonomy, the second Web provider user a number of tools for content creating. But all these features appeared gradually, as logical stage of Internet development, but not as desire to conform to the fashionable brand called “Web 2.0”.

Alongside with that, talks started about appearing Web 2.0 analogue in the area of distant learning, i.e. E-Learning 2.0 concept.

Tools corresponding to E-learning 2.0 are Web 2.0 use in the area of distant learning. Actually, access to instructional tools via browser has been achieved long ago in distant learning systems. Besides, E-Learning 2.0 presupposes a number of additional tools with Web 2.0 principle, i.e. rss and subcasting use in distant courses what makes distant student’s freedom even bigger. Subcast courses allow students to listen to lectures not only at the computer, but at any free time, even when not at home.

Distant learning tools with more developed cooperation functions are also E-Learning realizations. New systems of distant learning use not only forums for discussing topical problems, but also wiki for creating online joint projects.

One of E-Learning 2.0 realizations was offered by Blackboard Corporation, the leader on the market for distant learning tools. Its product Blackboard Beyond Initiative aims at changing the concept of electronic education and using “E-Learning 2,0” concept.

This product will be presented as special online application which will provide its student users work with personal program services, starting with childhoods years an up to beginning of their employment career.

“E-Learning 2.0” concept includes four products. The first is “Platform for Course Creation” which will allow educational institutions to create personalized services based on contents of their courses. This will be achieved with the help of special program superstructures available for professors. The next product “Lite Social Network” aims at simplifying interaction between students in online environment.

The product called “Live and Learn” will let every student create their personal online school journal and make entries starting with high school and up to beginning of their employment career. Use of unique service “Electronic Portfolio” will enable student to publish and store materials on the site for a long time. And finally, the fourth product “Network Learning Environment” was designed for educational institutions that wish to open access to their courses and allow student access not only form classrooms.

A further initiative of blackboard Company is creating global catalog of learning courses, a new resource which will allow students to publish and search learning materials, as well as communicate and cooperate with other students and professors on various projects.

Thus, E-Learning 2.0 concept which is realization of Web 2.0 principle in distant learning, presupposes the following functional possibilities in distant courses: rss-bands for news subscription, online lectures as subcasts, wiki-environment for joint projects. Probably the next step in developing distant learning tools will be wider use of students’ blogs for expressing their thoughts while learning some courses. At the same time, development of broadband and wireless Internet will allow students to work with distant courses not only at the computer, but with the help of other devices as well – mobile phones and music players.