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PROS AND CONS OF BLENDED LEARNING AT UNIVERSITIES

2020 has entered the history of all countries of the world as a period of radical rethinking of basic assumptions, beginning with our priorities. It has changed the lives of all people in the world and it demolished borders and united the whole world with a common problem and common pain. However, there are a lot of scientific researches that would describe advantages and disadvantages of blended learning. This article considers the problem of blended learning of students, in particular the advantages and disadvantages of blended learning in teaching foreign languages in universities of higher education. We have also analyzed the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic, since it affected all sphere of public life, including pedagogy. The concept of blended learning is determined from point of view different scientists, various online platforms and services used in foreign languages learning are considered, such as Duolingo (a service which can be used to learn English through interactive exercises, various games), Quizizz (a service for creating quizzes and tests, competitions, tests and tracking the results of each student), Google Arts & Culture (a service that allows you to go on a virtual trip to any museum in the world). The results of the study showed that conducting lectures online has a lot of advantages. They become more interesting, interactive and more effective. Furthermore, we considered conducting lectures using such educational platforms as TEAMS and ZOOM and their advantages. It was considered that the teachers have the opportunity to present new material visually, the presentation will help to master the new material better. We discussed a new role of a teacher-mentor who organizes, directs and coordinates the educational process is considered, as well as problems of lack of eye-contact, interaction between student and teacher, a lack of motivation and self-organization of students. Our research shows that conducting practical and laboratory classes face-to-face is more effective and in this way we can observe interaction between student and teacher.

Key words: *blended learning, students, online platforms and services, new role of teacher, interaction between student and teacher, motivation.*

Introduction. 2020 has entered the history of Ukraine and the history of all countries of the world as a period of radical rethinking of basic assumptions, beginning with our priorities. This year has been a real test for humanity. COVID-19 demolished borders and united the whole world with a common problem and common pain. Also, this pandemic showed a certain confusion of society at all levels, the coronavirus affected every sphere of public life, including pedagogy, and dealt a devastating blow to many spheres of public life. But at the same time, this year has taught us a lot, this year has forced each of us to reevaluate and rethink many things. Back to the XIX century, the famous German philosopher, psychologist and classical philologist, representative of irrationalism Friedrich Nietzsche said: "What does not kill us – makes us stronger" [9]. Modern psychologists point out that this phrase has a grain of truth. In recent decades, online learning and blended learning have been introduced more and more actively.

Under the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic, teachers and students are forced to switch to online learning using a variety of platforms. But firstly, all the world's universities faced many challenges in providing education, both logistical and organizational. Also, teachers and students were extremely dissatisfied with online learning, because it was completely unknown. However, a few months later, teachers overcame these difficulties and began to use new methods for distance learning, including online materials, radio training, short video lectures, electronic platforms, watching movies, performing various tasks.

According to the epidemiological situation, educators alternately switched to traditional and online learning, to blended learning. Extremely relevant practice in Ukrainian universities is to conduct lectures online, and conducting practical – face-to-face, in audiences. Blended learning initially received a barrage of complaints from parents, students and teachers, but later students and teachers managed to rectify the educational process! This topic is very relevant, so many articles, works and manuals have been written on this topic.

This theme was covered by many scientists as Bielawski L., Metcalf D., Kitchenham A., Marsh J., Macdonald J., Latchem C., Jung I., Murphy M., Graham C., Kokhanska T., Klyuchnikova N., Raluca D., Toby P., Aggarwal A., Garrison D and Vaughn N. and others.

The purpose of the article. In our study we aim to analyze the pros and cons of blended learning in teaching foreign languages in universities of higher education, to consider and analyze the concept of blended learning from the from point of view of different scholars, to consider various Internet platforms and services used in foreign language learning.

Analysis of recent research and publications. J. Marsh stated in his book "How to design effective blended learning" that "Blended learning is one of the leading trends in training today. While it is a fairly new term, the concept has been around for decades" [7]. Blended learning is really a very relevant and leading trend, because it allows you to combine learning with work and any other activity. Now the world and innovative technologies demand to be flexible, and blended learning allows to be so. Blended learning creates many opportunities and also helps education to become more innovative and creative.

Graham stated in "The handbook of blended learning: Global perspectives, local designs" that blended learning is defined as combining face-to-face (f2f) teaching with computer-mediated instruction. [2] Blended learning helps to solve such a problem as the lack of visual contact between students and the teacher and personal interaction between them during face-to-face learning. For many students and teachers, this is extremely important, since the teacher sees the reaction of students to the material, that is presented, pays attention to whether students understand or not. The teacher has the opportunity to focus more on the material that the students have not mastered well. Also conducting practical and laboratory classes, the teacher has the opportunity to involve all students, from the leader to the outsider. To my mind, conducting practical and laboratory classes remotely, it is extremely difficult to involve all students in the work, because it is impossible to follow the images of all students at once.

T. Kokhanska, N. Klyuchnikova in the article "Advantages and disadvantages of distance education in the development of information technology and telecommunications" note that the main advantage of these materials is that the students will be able to independently use lecture materials at a convenient time [4]. Lectures are conducted using such educational platforms as TEAMS and ZOOM. Teachers have the opportunity to present new material visually, the presentation that will help to master the new material better. Also, distance lectures allow at a new level to organize independent work of students under the guidance of the teacher. The distance lectures change the role of the teacher, make the teacher a mentor who organizes, directs and coordinates the educational process. This type of teaching forces the teachers to improve themselves, to improve teaching materials, to increase their creative potential and in particular to "keep up with the times". At the same time, students have the opportunity to review all the materials used in the lectures, the lectures again if they do not understand something. We should mention the flexibility of distance learning, because students have the opportunity to review the lecture if they were not present.

Discussion. Having analyzed a number of scientific endeavours, we have come to certain conclusion about the plus points of blended learning. First of all, it should be mentioned that each student has the opportunity to choose the sequence of studying the material, paying attention on the possibility of studying it. Pedagogy knows a lot of examples when a student "runs" the material, rather than mastering it, since several students have the ability to languages and they learn the material faster than other students.

Conducting practical and laboratory classes remotely allows teachers to use a large number of state-of-the-art teaching materials, online services and platforms, such as: Duolingo (a service which

can be used to learn English through interactive exercises, various games), Quizz (a service for creating quizzes and tests, competitions, tests and tracking the results of each student), Google Arts & Culture (a service that allows you to go on a virtual trip to any museum in the world). Online learning increases the intellectual potential of the student, helps to develop creativity and promotes self-organization of the student, increases the efficiency of his work. And, of course, distance learning saves the time which students and teachers spent on the road to get to the university.

According to Garrison and Vaughn, "blended learning is more than enhancing lectures. It represents the transformation of how we approach teaching and learning. [...] Blended learning is a coherent design approach that openly assesses and integrates the strengths of face-to-face and online learning to address worthwhile educational goals" [3]. With the help of computer technologies, lectures become brighter, interactive, easier to remember and perceive. Teachers have the opportunity to present new material visually, such as making a presentation or short videos that can better explain the material. As mentioned, students have the opportunity to review the same material several times if they have forgotten something, missed something or misunderstood new material.

Bester and Brand states that learners possess the ability to find new information; build new knowledge and relate new information to real life situations which can result to maximal learning achievement if the study environment is technology-rich [1]. Therefore, students have the opportunity to find information that is interesting to them and information that is practical and useful in life.

Online learning, however, has a number of disadvantages, the main of which is the lack of visual contact between students and the teacher and personal interaction between them. It is extremely difficult to focus students' attention when there is no eye contact. J. Macdonald stated that face-to-face sessions were valuable for the focusing of content, or the targeting of advice, particularly where the subject matter was particularly complex or difficult to understand [5]. For many students and teachers, this is extremely important, because the teacher sees the reaction of students to the material that is presented, pays attention on whether students understand or not. The teacher has the opportunity to focus more on the material that the students have not mastered well. Also, students in the classrooms do not have the opportunity to "rest" and only in this way classes will be the most effective.

Students should be motivated and only then distance classes will be more effective, because distance education is the ability to work independently, be self-organized and have an extremely strong desire to learn a discipline. It is worth noting what motivation denotes. Motivation, the psychological construct 'invented' to describe the mechanism by which individuals and groups choose particular behavior and persist with it, has a history going back millennia in all cultures [6]. Only if the student is motivated, the educational process will be effective and efficient, and motivation itself is important in almost all human actions. When a person makes a decision, of course, the motivational state itself influences. Of course, by studying a certain discipline, your motivation will influence the way you study and the result itself.

As the transition to distance learning was due to the epidemiological situation in the country and in the world and it happened very quickly, the program of educational process has not changed. Most of the educational programs cannot be adapted to online teaching, [8] and it is impossible to test students' knowledge objectively, as it is likely that they will not respond independently.

Conclusions. Taking everything into account, blended learning is really a very relevant and leading trend, because it allows you to combine learning with any activity. Now the world and innovative technologies require to change the educational programs and approach to learning. Blended learning creates many opportunities and also helps education to become more innovative and creative. Lectures, conducted through educational platforms such as TEAMS and ZOOM, help teachers to visualize new material, a presentation will help them to learn new material better. Practical tasks should be conducted both online and face-to-face, depending on the goals and material studied, because, as noted above, the teacher sees the reaction of students to the material, pays attention on whether students understand or not. The teacher has the opportunity to focus more on the material that the students have not mastered well. It also allows you to involve all students, from the leader to the outsider.

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ПЕРЕВАГИ ТА НЕДОЛІКИ ЗМІШАНОГО НАВЧАННЯ В УНІВЕРСИТЕТАХ

Анотація. У даній статті розглянута проблема змішаного навчання студентів, зокрема переваги та недоліки змішаного навчання при викладанні іноземної мови у ЗВО. Також розглянули вплив пандемії COVID-19, оскільки вона вплинула на всі сфери суспільного життя, включаючи педагогіку. Визначається поняття змішаного навчання з точки зору різних вчених, розглянуті різноманітні онлайн платформи та сервіси, які використовуються при вивченні іноземної мови, такі як *Diolingo* (сервіс, який можна використовувати для вивчення англійської мови за допомогою інтерактивних вправ, різних ігор), *Quizizz* (сервіс для створення вікторин та тестів, конкурсів, тестів та відстеження результатів кожного учня), *Google Arts & Culture* (сервіс, який дозволяє вирушити у віртуальну подорож до будь-якого музею світу). Також ми розглянули проведення лекцій з використанням таких освітніх платформ, як *TEAMS* та *ZOOM*, та їх переваги. Також розглянули те, що вчителі мають можливість подати новий матеріал наочно, а презентація допоможе краще засвоїти новий матеріал. Ми обговорили нову роль вчителя-наставника, який організовує, спрямовує та координує навчальний процес, а також розглянуті проблеми відсутності зорового контакту, взаємодії між студентом та викладачем, а також відсутності мотивації та самоорганізації у студентів.

Ключові слова: змішане навчання, студенти, онлайн платформи та сервіси, нова роль викладача, взаємодія між студентом та викладачем, мотивація.

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