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Pedagogical University**

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PRIMARY SCHOOLCHILDREN'S DIFFICULTIES AT SCHOOL FOLLOWING THE MULTIPLE CRISES: A SINGLE CENTER CROSS-SECTIONAL STUDY

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**Hiba ABDO¹, Mouna CHEHABEDDINE², Hiba CHEHABEDDINE³,
Inaam NASRALLAH⁴, Assem EL-KAK⁵, & Georges HATEM⁶**



¹ *Master's Degree in Pharmaceutical Business Administration, Clinical and Epidemiological Research Laboratory, Faculty of Pharmacy, Lebanese University, Hadat, Lebanon.*

✉ **E-Mail:** hiba.abdo@outlook.com

🆔 <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-5590-8055>



² *Clinical and Epidemiological Research Laboratory, Faculty of Pharmacy, Lebanese University, Hadat, Lebanon.*

✉ **E-Mail:** chehabeddinemouna@gmail.com

🆔 <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-3926-9558>



³ *Clinical and Epidemiological Research Laboratory, Faculty of Pharmacy, Lebanese University, Hadat, Lebanon.*

✉ **E-Mail:** hiba.chehabeddine@gmail.com

🆔 <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-9054-6574>

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Primary Schoolchildren's Difficulties at School Following the Multiple Crises: A Single Center Cross-Sectional Study
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⁴ *Ph.D. in Public Health, Clinical and Epidemiological Research Laboratory, Faculty of Pharmacy, Lebanese University, Hadat, Lebanon.*

✉ **E-Mail:** inaamkoteich@gmail.com

id <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-7037-9269>



⁵ *Ph.D., Clinical and Epidemiological Research Laboratory, Faculty of Pharmacy, Lebanese University, Hadat, Lebanon.*

✉ **E-Mail:** aelkak@ul.edu.lb

id <https://orcid.org/0009-0008-1661-0459>



⁶ *PharmD, Ph.D., Clinical and Epidemiological Research Laboratory, Faculty of Pharmacy, Lebanese University, Hadat, Lebanon; Faculty of Medicine, University of Porto, Porto, Portugal.*

✉ **E-Mail:** georges.r.hatem@gmail.com

id <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0964-9722>

ABSTRACT

Purpose. *This study aims to evaluate schoolchildren's strengths and difficulties following crises.*

Methods. *A pilot cross-sectional study was carried out over two months (April – May 2023) using a standardized questionnaire for data collection. A convenient sample of 130 students was recruited from a private school and included in this study. A comparison between groups was carried out on several factors: conduct problems, peer problems, emotional score, hyperactivity, and total difficulties scores. Bivariate analyses were conducted, in which the dependent variables were age, sex, and difficulty scores.*

Results. *A significant risk for peer problems (32.2%) and emotional symptoms (22.2%) was noted among the participants. A substantial risk of clinically significant problems was associated with hyperactivity. Girls presented an increased risk of clinical problems (46.9%) associated with their emotional symptoms, significantly higher than males (25%; $p=0.015$), resulting in significantly more clinical problems associated with their total difficulties*

score compared to boys (32.3% versus 15.1%; $p=0.031$). Overall, most students (90.9%) had no significant problems. However, 5% had a slightly low prosocial scale, and 4.1% had lower scores, reflecting a high probability of substantial clinical risk.

Conclusion. *The crises in Lebanon have exacerbated existing inequalities in access to education, leading to or exacerbating school difficulties. Findings reflected the influence of parents and the school on the children's academic performance and psychological well-being and highlighted the need for providing additional support to schools and investing in mental health services for students.*

KEYWORDS: *Schoolchildren, Difficulties, Parents, Lebanon, Schools.*

INTRODUCTION

Children may experience various difficulties in school that can affect their academic performance and overall well-being (Martinsone et al., 2022). Those with learning disabilities may struggle with reading, writing, or other specific areas of academic learning. Conditions like dyslexia (Yang et al., 2022), dyscalculia, or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) can make it harder for them to process information and grasp new concepts (McDougal et al., 2022). As a result, some children may exhibit behavioral problems in school, such as impulsivity, aggression, or difficulty following rules (Aro et al., 2022). These challenges can disrupt the learning environment and affect their academic progress. Social and emotional problems, such as difficulties in social interactions, low self-esteem, anxiety, or depression, can lead to significant struggles in building relationships with peers, participating in group activities, or concentrating on their studies due to emotional distress (Martinsone et al., 2022; Mori et al., 2021).

Collaboration between parents, teachers, and relevant professionals can help address these challenges and create a supportive environment for children to thrive academically and emotionally (Badrasawi et al., 2019; Murphy, 2022). Several strategies showed benefits, whereas schoolchildren showed an improvement in their behavior after a series of education about sustainability and environmental emotions (Robina-Ramírez et al., 2020). After exposure to cognitive behavioral therapy, they also showed better learning abilities, allowing parents and teachers to be more familiar with undiagnosed psychological conditions (Matthys & Schutter, 2021). Since previous research showed a positive association between peer bullying and the risk of children or adolescents becoming perpetrators at an older age (Naveed et al., 2020), it is essential to assess these difficulties earlier. Most children prized learning theoretical and empirical activities, which transformed their environmental behavior (Powell et al., 2011), and those with high conduct problems and aggression were more prone to face management problems at school, namely in their relationships with their families, peers, and surroundings (Powell et al., 2011). Physical activity can improve the motor skills and social behavior of children with ADHD (Arumugam & Parasher, 2019).

Lebanon is amid rapidly escalating and unprecedented crises, plunging the country into deep poverty and jeopardizing national well-being, economic development, social well-being, and national and regional stability (Dahham et al., 2023; Gedeon et al., 2022). These crises were compounded by the Beirut blast in August 2020, an economic collapse, the

Coronavirus disease of 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic, and the ongoing political corruption and dysfunctional state response to the crisis. Several schools were closed, and many children were reported to have dropped out due to financial difficulties (Yamak & Chaaban, 2022). Moreover, research showed that many students could not afford online learning resources such as computer access and a stable internet connection (Hatem et al., 2023). Increased violence against children and gender-based violence have been reported (Bakhos et al., 2022), exacerbating school difficulties (Manana et al., 2023). The literature reported important links between parental involvement and children's personality development and education, emphasizing the importance of regular cooperation between schools, communities, and parents (Badrasawi et al., 2019). By actively assessing school difficulties, parents can proactively address challenges, advocate for their children's needs, and support their educational journey. Given that no study assessed the school difficulties of children from the point of view of parents, particularly following the crises in Lebanon, this study aims to evaluate the strengths and difficulties faced by schoolchildren in an urban area. Findings from this study can help identify those with higher risks and develop informed decisions accordingly.

METHODS

Study design

A pilot cross-sectional study was carried out over two months (April-May 2023), using a questionnaire for data collection and assessing the strengths and difficulties faced by primary school students. The study protocol was registered in the clinicaltrials.gov registry (NCT05870085) before the initiation of data collection and is publicly accessible.

Study population

Schoolchildren from a private school were included in the study. They were visited at their school located in Beirut, Lebanon. They were included based on pre-defined criteria, such as age (5-11 years) and grades (1-5). No selection criteria were based on sex, nationality, or ethnicity. A convenient sample of 130 students was included in this pilot study.

Study tool and data collection

Data was collected using a printed survey (see supplementary material) filled out by the student's parents or legal guardians. It was developed after a literature review taking into consideration expert opinions. It comprised two sections: the first included questions encompassing the general characteristics of the participants, such as the age of the parent completing the survey and his/her relation to the student (mother or father), their current marital status (married or divorced/widowed) their highest level of education (elementary school or less, high school and university or more) their perceived economic situation (very poor, poor, and average or more), working status, smoking status, and the total number of children. Other information, such as the age, sex, and school grade of the student, was retrieved from the school database. The strengths and difficulties questionnaire was used in the second section. This tool was previously used and validated in epidemiological studies among schoolchildren (Al-Hendawi, 2023). It is divided into four groups, with five statements per group. These statements collected information regarding the children's emotional symptoms, conduct problems,

hyperactivity, peer problems, and children's prosocial behavior. The survey was available in English and Arabic based on participants' preferences. It was given by the school directly to students, and afterward, parents were asked to complete it at their time and place preferences to minimize recall bias. To ensure a higher participation rate, several reminders were sent to parents by the school.

Ethical consideration

The study protocol, tool, and consent form were reviewed and approved by the institutional review board of the Faculty of Pharmacy of the Lebanese University (reference 3/23/D). An initial meeting with the school director was performed, and written approval was obtained following minimal suggestions. The first page of the survey sent to parents included the written study's objectives and a consent form requesting the legal guardian's signature. Individuals were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could withdraw it at any point of the study with only provided answers registered. Confidentiality was preserved since no name or personal data had been collected, and the surveys were labeled based on the student's grade and school number. Another researcher was responsible for data entry and analysis to minimize interviewer bias. Parents were not provided financial incentives, and results were considered for research purposes only.

Statistical analysis

Statistical analyses were performed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Inc., Chicago, Illinois) Version 29. Categorical variables are presented using frequencies and percentages, including the general characteristics of the students and the individual answers per statement. The age of the student and the parent filling out the survey, the score per difficulty group, and the total difficulty scores are presented through mean and standard deviation. The recommended clinical risk evaluation and scoring were performed (Goodman & Goodman, 2009). The scores per group had an acceptable internal consistency and positive inter-item correlations, with a Cronbach alpha >0.6 (emotional symptoms 0.704; conduct problems 0.612; hyperactivity symptoms 0.676; peer problems 0.745; and prosocial behavior 0.651). Bivariate analysis was conducted in which the independent variables were sex (male; female) and age (<9 and ≥9 years) in association with the different difficulty scores. The chi-square test was used to compare percentages between associate categorical variables. A p-value of less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant.

RESULTS

General characteristics of the study sample

A total of 130 parents were approached, of which 121 agreed to participate in the study (acceptance rate of 93.1%). **Table 1** presents the general characteristics of the students. Most surveys were completed by mothers (82.6%), and only 17.4% were completed by fathers. The mean ages of the students and parents were 8.68 (1.53) and 39.74 (6.23) years, respectively. The study sample included more females (55.8%) than males (44.2%). Twenty-eight participants (21.5%) were in grade 1, 19 (14.6%) in grade 2, 28 (21.5%) in grade 3, 29 (22.3%) in grade 4, and 26 (20.0%) in grade 5. Most parents were married (90%), and 70.9% were non-smokers or ex-smokers. Among others, 45.0% had a university degree

or more, 41.7% had a high school degree, and the rest (13.3%) finished elementary school or less. Most parents (76.5%) reported having an average economic status or more, and in around 61.0%, one parent worked, while only 7.4% of both parents did not work. Only 13.2% had one child, 46.3% had two children, and 31.4% had three children.

Table 1

The schoolchildren’s general characteristics (filled out by parents)

		Frequency (%)
Age of student (N=121)	Mean (SD)	8.68 (1.53)
Age of the parent (N=120)	Mean (SD)	39.74 (6.23)
Sex (N=129)	Male	57 (44.2%)
	Female	72 (55.8%)
Grade (N=130)	Grade 1	28 (21.5%)
	Grade 2	19 (14.6%)
	Grade 3	28 (21.5%)
	Grade 4	29 (22.3%)
	Grade 5	26 (20.0%)
Relation to the student (N=121)	Father	21 (17.4%)
	Mother	100 (82.6%)
Marital status (N=120)	Married	108 (90.0%)
	Divorced/widowed	12 (10.0%)
Highest level of education (N=120)	Elementary school or less	16 (13.3%)
	High school	50 (41.7%)
	University or more	54 (45.0%)
Economic situation (N=119)	So poor	4 (3.4%)
	Poor	24 (20.2%)
	Average or more	91 (76.5%)
Working status (N=121)	Both parents work	38 (31.4%)
	One parent works	74 (61.2%)
	Both parents don't work	9 (7.4%)
Smoking status (N=117)	Smoker	34 (29.1%)
	Non-smoker/ex-smoker	83 (70.9%)
Total number of children (N=121)	One child	16 (13.2%)
	Two children	56 (46.3%)
	Three children	38 (31.4%)
	Four children or more	11 (9.1%)

Results are presented through Frequency (Percentages) or Mean (Standard Deviation)

Parents' Reports on Children's Strengths and Difficulties

The reported students' symptoms are summarized in **Table 2**. Regarding emotional symptoms, around two-thirds (65.3%) disagreed with the statement that their children often complain of headaches, stomachaches, or sickness.

At the same time, the rest said that it is somewhat true or certainly true (26.4% and 8.3%, respectively). More than half of parents considered that their child had many worries or often seemed worried (somewhat true (39.1%) and certainly true (16.5%)). Only 8.5% were certain that their child is often unhappy, depressed, or tearful, and 24.6% said it is somewhat true. Around 26.0% reported their child being nervous or clingy in new situations and easily losing confidence somewhat, and 13.6% as certainly true.

When asked if their child had many fears or was easily scared, 21.4% agreed, 37.6% said it was somewhat true, and the rest (41.0%) disagreed. Concerning their children's conduct problems, only 10 (8.3%) agreed that their children often lose their temper. Seventy-five (62.0%) considered it untrue, and 36 (29.8%) somewhat true. Seventy-five (64.1%) confirmed that their child is generally well-behaved and usually does what adults request, while 8 (6.8%) said it is not true, and 34 (29.1%) somewhat true. Eighty-seven respondents (74.4%) declared that their child did not often fight with other children or bully them, 24 (20.5%) reported it to be somewhat true, and 6 (5.1%) certainly true. More than half of the parents (80 (69.0%)) disagreed that their child often lies or cheats.

In contrast, four participants assured that it is certainly true, and 32 (27.6%) somewhat true. Most parents (96.6%) disagreed about their children stealing from home, school, or elsewhere.

When parents were asked if their child is restless, overactive, and cannot stay still for long, 53 (43.8%) answered that it is not valid, 43 (35.5%) somewhat true, and 25 (20.7%) certainly true. Only 10 (8.6%) confirmed that he/she is constantly fidgeting or squirming, while around 63.0% disagreed, and 33 (28.4%) said it is somewhat true. Forty-three participants (36.8%) considered that it is not true that their children are easily distracted and their concentration wanders, 50 (42.7%) is somewhat true, and 24 (20.5%) certainly true. Fifty-four (46.2%) reported that their child thinks before acting (somewhat true), and 50 (42.7%) were certainly agreeing with this statement. Sixty-four (55.2%) agreed that their child has a good attention span and sees chores or homework through. Ten (8.6%) rejected that, and 42 (36.2%) claimed it as somewhat true. In the context of their children's peer problems, concerning solitariness and the preference to play alone, 72 (62.6%) considered that is not true, 30 (26.1%) somewhat true, and 13 (11.3%) certainly true. Eighty (67.8%) agreed that their child has at least one good friend. twelve participants (10.2%) answered that it is not true, and 26 (22.0%) somewhat true.

Although more than half of the parents (77 (64.7%)) affirmed that other children generally like him/her, only five (4.2%) said it is not true, and 37 (31.1%) somewhat true. Sixty-eight respondents (58.6%) claimed that it is not true that their child is picked on or bullied by other children, 36 (31.0%) stated that it is somewhat true, and 12 (10.3%) certainly true. Twenty-two (18.8%) believed that it is certainly true he/she gets along better with adults than with other children, 48 (41.0%) is somewhat true, and 47 (40.2%) is not true.

Table 2

Parents' answers to statements related to their children's emotional symptoms, conduct problems, hyperactivity and peer problem scale

	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Mean (SD)
Emotional Symptoms Scale	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True	Score/2
Often complains of headaches, stomachaches, or sickness. (N=121)	79 (65.3%)	32 (26.4%)	10 (8.3%)	0.43 (0.64)
Many worries or often seems worried. (N=115)	51 (44.3%)	45 (39.1%)	19 (16.5%)	0.72 (0.73)
Often unhappy, depressed, or tearful. (N=118)	79 (66.9%)	29 (24.6%)	10 (8.5%)	0.42 (0.64)
Nervous or clingy in new situations, easily loses confidence. (N=118)	71 (60.2%)	31 (26.3%)	16 (13.6%)	0.53 (0.72)
Many fears, easily scared (N=117)	48 (41.0%)	44 (37.6%)	25 (21.4%)	0.80 (0.77)
Conduct Problem Scale	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True	Score/2
Often loses temper. (N=121)	75 (62.0%)	36 (29.8%)	10 (8.3%)	0.46 (0.65)
Generally well-behaved, usually does what adults request. (N=117)	8 (6.8%)	34 (29.1%)	75 (64.1%)	0.43 (0.62)
Often fights with other children or bullies them. (N=117)	87 (74.4%)	24 (20.5%)	6 (5.1%)	0.31 (0.56)
Often lies or cheats. (N=116)	80 (69.0%)	32 (27.6%)	4 (3.4%)	0.34 (0.54)
Steals from home, school or elsewhere. (N=117)	113 (96.6%)	2 (1.7%)	2 (1.7%)	0.51 (0.29)
Hyperactivity Scale	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True	Score/2
Restless, overactive, cannot stay still for long. (N=121)	53 (43.8%)	43 (35.5%)	25 (20.7%)	0.77 (0.77)
Constantly fidgeting or squirming. (N=116)	73 (62.9%)	33 (28.4%)	10 (8.6%)	0.46 (0.65)
Easily distracted, concentration wanders. (N=117)	43 (36.8%)	50 (42.7%)	24 (20.5%)	0.84 (0.74)
Thinks things out before acting. (N=117)	13 (11.1%)	54 (46.2%)	50 (42.7%)	0.68 (0.66)

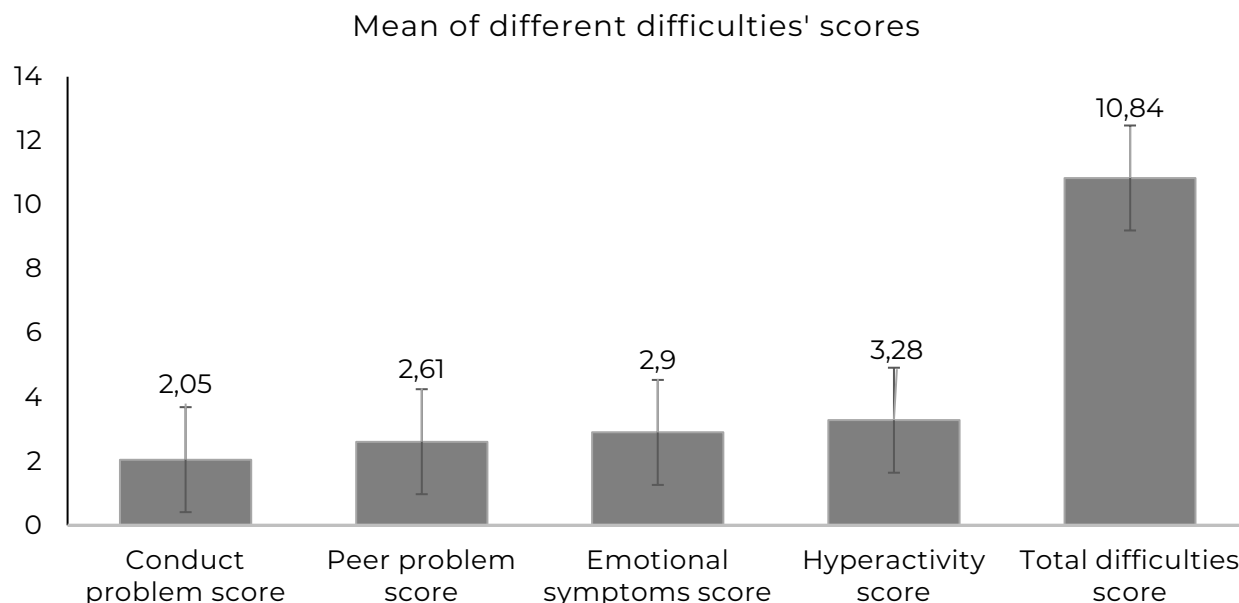
Good attention span sees chores or homework through. (N=116)	10 (8.6%)	42 (36.2%)	64 (55.2%)	0.53 (0.65)
Peer Problem Scale	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True	Score/2
Rather solitary and prefers to play alone. (N=115)	72 (62.6%)	30 (26.1%)	13 (11.3%)	0.49 (0.69)
Has at least one good friend. (N=118)	12 (10.2%)	26 (22.0%)	80 (67.8%)	0.42 (0.67)
Generally liked by other children. (N=119)	5 (4.2%)	37 (31.1%)	77 (64.7%)	0.39 (0.57)
Picked on or bullied by other children. (N=116)	68 (58.6%)	36 (31.0%)	12 (10.3%)	0.52 (0.68)
Gets along better with adults than with other children. (N=117)	47 (40.2%)	48 (41.0%)	22 (18.8%)	0.79 (0.74)

Results are presented through Frequency (Percentages) or Mean (Standard Deviation)

Figure 1 displays the total scores of the different groups (over 10) and the overall computed score (over 40). The conduct problems 2.05 (2.66) and peer problems 2.61 (3.35) groups had lower scores than the emotional symptoms 2.9 (3.5) and hyperactivity 3.28 (3.47) groups. A total score of 10.84 (6.23) was obtained when summing up the different scores.

Figure 1

The total strengths and difficulties scores (per group and overall score)



The classification of scores based on the corresponding degree of significant clinical problems is presented in **Table 3**. More than half of the students were unlikely to have clinically significant problems in all groups, with notably higher frequencies of closer-to-average scores in the conduct problems (76.9%) and hyperactivity groups (81.4%).

Nevertheless, slightly raised risks were observed in 15.3% of students in the peer problems category and 15.4% in the emotional problems section. A substantial risk of clinically significant problems was mainly noted for the peer problems (32.2%) and emotional symptoms groups (22.2%), while around 10% of students had an increased risk of clinical concerns associated with hyperactivity.

Table 3

Classification of scores based on the rising degree of clinically significant problems

	Close to Average	Slightly raised	High
	Clinically significant problems are unlikely	May reflect clinically significant problems	Substantial risk of clinically significant problems
Conduct problem score (N=117)	90 (76.9%)	11 (9.4%)	16 (13.7%)
Peer problem score (N=118)	62 (52.5%)	18 (15.3%)	38 (32.2%)
Emotional symptoms score (N=117)	73 (62.4%)	18 (15.4%)	26 (22.2%)
Hyperactivity score (N=118)	96 (81.4%)	10 (8.5%)	12 (10.2%)
Total difficulties score (N=119)	89 (74.8%)	9 (7.6%)	21 (16.2%)

Results are presented through Frequency (Percentages)

Bivariate analysis was conducted to assess the association between the sex and age of the students and the different scores, including conduct problems, peer problems, emotional score hyperactivity, and total difficulties scores (**Table 4**). Sex was significantly associated with the conduct problem score, where a higher percentage of females (29.7%) had an increased risk of clinically significant problems compared to 13.5% of males (p-value=0.037). Females also presented an increased risk of clinical problems (46.9%) associated with their emotional symptoms, significantly higher than males (25%; p=0.015). As a result, significantly more females (32.3%) had an increased risk of clinical problems associated with their total difficulties score compared to males (15.1%; p=0.031). The student’s age did not affect any group's risk of substantial clinical problems (p>0.05).

Table 4

Association between the different scores (per group and total score) and the sex and age of the students

		Close to Average	Increased risk	p-value
Conduct problem score	Male	45 (86.5%)	7 (13.5%)	0.037
	Female	45 (70.3%)	19 (29.7%)	
	<9 years	41 (77.4%)	12 (22.6%)	0.882
	≥9 years	48 (76.2%)	15 (23.8%)	
Peer problem score	Male	24 (46.2%)	28 (53.8%)	0.185
	Female	38 (58.5%)	27 (41.5%)	

	<9 years	29 (53.7%)	25 (46.3%)	0.753
	≥9 years	32 (50.8%)	31 (49.8%)	
Emotional symptoms score	Male	39 (75.0%)	13 (25.0%)	0.015
	Female	34 (53.1%)	30 (46.9%)	
	<9 years	33 (62.3%)	20 (37.7%)	0.968
	≥9 years	39 (61.9%)	24 (38.1%)	
Hyperactivity score	Male	44 (84.6%)	8 (15.4%)	0.518
	Female	52 (80.0%)	13 (20.0%)	
	<9 years	47 (87.0%)	7 (13.0%)	0.134
	≥9 years	48 (76.2%)	15 (23.8%)	
Total difficulties score	Male	45 (84.9%)	8 (15.1%)	0.031
	Female	44 (67.7%)	21 (32.3%)	
	<9 years	40 (74.1%)	14 (25.9%)	0.908
	≥9 years	48 (75.0%)	16 (25.0%)	

Results are presented through Frequency (Percentages). P-values<0.05 are presented in bold and represent statistically significant associations.

Parents' answers to statements about their children's prosocial behavior are described in **Table 5**. Around two-thirds (66.9%) agreed that their child is considerate of other people's feelings, and 29.7% said it is somewhat true. Most parents (72.5%) affirmed that their child shares readily with other children, while 4.2% answered that it is not true, and 23.3% somewhat true. Almost 15% of parents consider their child as careless if someone is hurt, upset, or angry. In contrast, the rest reported helpful behavior in the abovementioned case as certainly true (64.2%) or somewhat true (21.1%). More than 85% declared their child kind to younger children, and only 5.2% believed the opposite. Seventy-three percent reported being certainly true that their child often volunteers to help others. As a result, an overall total score of 8.29 (1.86) was observed. The majority (90.9%) had no clinically significant problems, 5% had a slightly low prosocial scale, and 4.1% had a lower score reflecting a higher probability of substantial clinical risks.

Table 5

Parents' answers to statements related to their children's prosocial behavior

	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Frequency (%)	Mean (SD)
Prosocial Scale	Not True	Somewhat True	Certainly True	Score/2
Considerate of other people's feelings. (N=118)	4 (3.4%)	35 (29.7%)	79 (66.9%)	1.63 (0.55)
Shares readily with other children. (N=120)	5 (4.2%)	28 (23.3%)	87 (72.5%)	1.68 (0.55)

Helpful if someone is hurt, upset, or feeling ill. (N=109)	16 (14.7%)	23 (21.1%)	70 (64.2%)	1.49 (0.74)
Kind to younger children. (N=116)	6 (5.2%)	11 (9.5%)	99 (85.3%)	1.80 (0.51)
Often volunteers to help others (N=115)	4 (3.5%)	27 (23.5%)	84 (73.0%)	1.69 (0.53)
Total score /10				8.29 (1.86)
	Close to average	Slightly low	Low	
	Clinically significant problems are unlikely	May reflect clinically significant problems	Substantial risk of clinically significant problems	
Frequency (%)	110 (90.9%)	6 (5.0%)	5 (4.1%)	

Results are presented through Frequency (Percentages) or Mean (Standard Deviation)

Parents' answers to statements related to the characteristics of the difficulties and their corresponding interferences with their child's life are elucidated in **Table 6**.

When parents are asked if their child has difficulties in emotions, concentration, behavior, or getting along with others, 47.1% answered that it is not true, 37.0% true with minor difficulties, 13.4% true with definite difficulties, and only 2.5% reported it to be true with severe difficulties.

Concerning how long these difficulties have been present, 9.3% claimed that it is less than one month or between 6-12 months, 25.6% between 1-5 months, and 55.8% for over one year.

Around 35% reported that the difficulties did not upset or distress the child, 30.3% agreed a little, and 21.2% reported a significant impact. In this context, 60.3% reported that the difficulties did not affect their child's home life, and 30.2% reported a small interference.

Half of the sample said the difficulties did not affect their child's friendships, while 10.9% affirmed a significant interference and 14.1% a medium amount. Regarding learning ability, 41.3% believed that the difficulties did not interfere with their child's learning, 38.1% said that it interferes a little, 11.1% a medium amount, and 9.5% a great deal.

Almost two-thirds disagreed with the interference of the difficulties with the child's leisure activities, 20.0% agreed a little, 12.3% a medium amount, and 6.2% a great deal. Around 26% of parents said their child's difficulties burdened their family a little, and 19.7% a medium amount or a great deal, respectively.

Table 6

Parents' answers to statements related to the characteristics of the difficulties and their interferences

		Frequency (%)
Do you think the child has difficulties in emotions, concentration, behavior, or getting along with others? (N=119)	No	56 (47.1%)
	Yes-minor difficulties	44 (37.0%)
	Yes-definite difficulties	16 (13.4%)
	Yes-severe difficulties	3 (2.5%)
If yes, how long have these difficulties been present? (N=43)	Less than one month	4 (9.3%)
	1-5 months	11 (25.6%)
	6-12 months	4 (9.3%)
	Over one year	24 (55.8%)
The difficulties upset or distress the child (N=66)	Not at all	23 (34.8%)
	A little	20 (30.3%)
	A medium amount	9 (13.6%)
	A great deal	14 (21.2%)
The difficulties interfere with the child's home life (N=63)	Not at all	38 (60.3%)
	A little	19 (30.2%)
	A medium amount	4 (6.3%)
	A great deal	2 (3.2%)
The difficulties interfere with the child's friendship (N=64)	Not at all	32 (50.0%)
	A little	16 (25.0%)
	A medium amount	9 (14.1%)
	A great deal	7 (10.9%)
The difficulties interfere with the child's learning (N=63)	Not at all	26 (41.3%)
	A little	24 (38.1%)
	A medium amount	7 (11.1%)
	A great deal	6 (9.5%)
The difficulties interfere with the child's leisure activities (N=65)	Not at all	40 (61.5%)
	A little	13 (20.0%)
	A medium amount	8 (12.3%)
	A great deal	4 (6.2%)
The difficulties put a burden on the family (N=66)	Not at all	23 (34.8%)
	A little	17 (25.8%)
	A medium amount	13 (19.7%)
	A great deal	13 (19.7%)

Results are presented through Frequency (Percentages)

DISCUSSION

In the present study, children's ages ranged between 6 and 11 years, reported as adequate to detect learning difficulties and social and emotional challenges (Strand & Lindorff, 2021). The sample comprised slightly more females than males, contrasting with a previous cross-sectional study in Pakistan (Naveed et al., 2020). Most parents finished high school or had a university degree, which can make them more involved in their child's achievement. More than three quarters had an average economic situation or more. An earlier study revealed that parents with a low socioeconomic status are less involved in their children's education (Hemmerechts et al., 2017), which might underestimate students' difficulties. The prevalence of emotional symptoms was significantly higher in females (46.9%) than males (25%), in agreement with a study performed in southern Brazil showing higher emotional symptoms among females (Bach et al., 2019). Contrarily, a study conducted in Guangdong, China, on schoolchildren between 6 and 11 years old showed that the total behavioral and emotional problems increased with age, and the prevalence was noticeably higher in males than females (Li et al., 2023). Conduct problems were significantly higher among males than females in contrast to the previously mentioned research (Bach et al., 2019). Nevertheless, this same study showed statistically significant hyperactivity/inattention in males. Comparable results between males and females were found in the present study, possibly due to the impact of other stressors on students' behavior, such as online education and multiple strikes among teachers.

Over half of the students were unlikely to have clinically significant problems in all groups. Nonetheless, a substantial risk of clinically significant problems was noted for the peer problems, and a higher frequency of close-to-average scores was observed in the hyperactivity group. This result was also noted in more than half of the children in a cross-sectional study conducted on Syrian and Jordanian schoolchildren, with more peer relationships, conduct, and emotional problems (Yonis et al., 2021). Only 4.1% had a lower prosocial score reflecting a higher probability of substantial clinical risks. However, approximately half of the sample was rated within the abnormal range in the prosocial behavior subscales. These data can suggest potential future problems since children at this age were commonly referred by health and education professionals for problems in attention, learning, and/or memory (Bryant et al., 2020).

Regarding the characteristics of the difficulties and their interferences, around half of the parents said that their child did not have any emotional, behavioral, or concentration difficulties. Findings of a study conducted on Syrian schoolchildren highlighted emotional and behavioral problems (Yonis et al., 2021), and another research revealed a remarkably high rate of perceived cognitive impairment due to emotional problems among high school students in the United States (Iverson & Iverson, 2022). Most parents reported that school difficulties did upset or distress their children. This result was also observed among schoolchildren in different settings (Simpson, 2005), emphasizing the need for adequate interventions to mitigate such risks. Although around 60% of parents reported that the difficulties did not affect their child's home life, other research highlighted strong interference in school and home adjustment (Makarova et al., 2023). Regarding learning ability, 41.3% believed that the difficulties did not interfere with their child's learning, and almost two-thirds disagreed with the interference of the difficulties with the child's leisure activities. A strong relationship between school difficulties and

students' achievement and intellectual ability was previously noted (Cox & Mullen, 2023), suggesting the need for engaging parents to understand the impact of such challenges.

This study possesses several limitations. The sample size, contextual factors, and sociocultural attributes specific to Lebanon might affect its external validity; therefore, its findings cannot be generalized to schoolchildren in diverse settings. Among others, the study exclusively involved students from a single private school; variations in results may exist when considering other private or public schools. Students were included based on pre-defined criteria such as age and grades, potentially inducing selection bias. Efforts were made to mitigate this bias by adequately training data collectors and including all individuals meeting the criteria.

Nonetheless, to our knowledge, this is the first pilot study examining the difficulties faced by students in Lebanon from parents' point of view and, as a result, can provide a descriptive approach to these challenges, thus, enabling improved control. Furthermore, results from this study warrant consideration for a future longitudinal investigation involving a larger sample size and allowing for more robust control for potential confounding variables.

CONCLUSION

The multifaceted difficulties in Lebanon have significantly impacted schoolchildren, leading to unforeseen social and health consequences. Primary schoolchildren have exhibited various problems, including emotional, conduct, hyperactivity, peer, and prosocial issues. These problems were linked to age and sex. The present study's findings have underscored the influence of parents, teachers, and relevant professionals, emphasizing the necessity for accessible and affordable preventive psychological support services. These findings imply that special attention should be directed towards school children, drawing lessons from other countries about effective crisis management strategies. Additionally, it highlighted the school's role in detecting diverse difficulties that may affect the child's academic performance and overall well-being.

DECLARATIONS

ETHICS APPROVAL AND CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

After reviewing the study protocol, questionnaire, and consent form, the institutional review board of the faculty of pharmacy of the Lebanese University approved the study. Written informed consent was obtained from each participant.

CONSENT FOR PUBLICATION

Not applicable

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AVAILABILITY OF DATA AND MATERIALS

Not applicable

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:**ТРУДНОЩІ МОЛОДШИХ ШКОЛЯРІВ У ШКОЛІ ПІСЛЯ БАГАТЬОХ КРИЗ:
ПЕРЕХРЕСНЕ ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ ЄДИНОГО ЦЕНТРУ**

Мета. Представлене дослідження має на меті оцінити сильні сторони та труднощі школярів після криз.

Методи. Пілотне перехресне дослідження проводилося протягом двох місяців (квітень – травень 2023 р.) за допомогою стандартизованої анкети для збору даних. Вибірку зі 130 учнів було набрано з приватної

школи та включено до цього дослідження. Порівняння між групами проводилося за кількома факторами: проблеми з поведінкою, проблеми з однолітками, емоційний бал, гіперактивність і загальні показники труднощів. Було проведено двофакторний аналіз, у якому залежними змінними були вік, стать і показники складності.

Результати. Серед учасників було відзначено значний ризик проблем з однолітками (32,2%) та емоційних симптомів (22,2%). Істотний ризик клінічно значущих проблем був пов'язаний з гіперактивністю. Дівчата продемонстрували підвищений ризик клінічних проблем (46,9%), пов'язаних з їхніми емоційними симптомами, значно вищий, ніж чоловіки (25%; $p=0,015$), що призвело до значно більшої кількості клінічних проблем, пов'язаних із їхніми загальними труднощами, порівняно з хлопцями (32,3% проти 15,1%; $p=0,031$). Загалом більшість студентів (90,9%) не мали значних проблем. Проте 5% мали дещо низьку просоціальну шкалу, а 4,1% мали нижчі оцінки, що відображає високу ймовірність значного клінічного ризику.

Висновок. Криза в Лівані посилила існуючу нерівність у доступі до освіти, що призвело до або посилило труднощі в школі. Отримані дані відображають вплив батьків і школи на успішність і психологічне благополуччя дітей і підкреслюють необхідність надання додаткової підтримки школам та інвестування в служби психічного здоров'я для учнів.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: Школярі, Труднощі, Батьки, Ліван, Школи.

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CURRICULUM FIDELITY OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING TEACHERS AND FACTORS AFFECTING TEACHERS' IMPLEMENTATION AT ETHIOPIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES' CONTEXT

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Baye Ashebir ANTENEH¹, & Alemu Hailu ANSHU²



¹ Department of Foreign Language and Literature, College of Humanities, Language Studies, Journalism and Communication, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

✉ E-Mail: bayeykt2000@gmail.com

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5045-6784>



² Department of Foreign Language and Literature, College of Humanities, Language Studies, Journalism and Communication, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

✉ E-Mail: alemuhailu2011@gmail.com

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-0041-1095>

ABSTRACT

This study **aimed** to explore English Language Teaching (ELT) teachers' fidelity to the designed freshman English curriculum.

A mixed **method** research design, where the quantitative data served to support the qualitative one, was used in the study. A qualitative method that enabled participants to generate their ideas as they have experienced in implementing the freshman English curriculum was used as main design in the study. One-to-one interviews, observations, and post-observation interviews were used as data collection instruments. Verbatim transcription was made for the qualitative data. Then, the relevant data was categorized and the data not relevant to the present purpose was bracketed. Categories seemed to be mutually exclusive, however, and analysis was made by making connections between or among the various categories.

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The **result** showed that ELT teachers followed the fidelity perspective by adhering to the contents of the official curriculum even in circumstances where adaptations were required. However, teachers' fidelity to the designed curriculum or to the official curriculum was offset by teachers' decision to skip certain activities. ELT teachers' adherence was imposed by different factors, including a high-stakes exam, alignment problems with instruction and assessment, the use of students' scores for placement, relevance and repetition of activities, and lack of training. Personal/teacher factors (teachers' beliefs, confidence, knowledge, and skills in improving the curriculum) and student factors (motivation and interest) also had significant influence.

It can be **concluded** that ELT teachers missed one of the significant professional roles they could play during curriculum implementation – adapting contents based on the classroom context. Professional development training should be proffered to ELT teachers. In addition, institutional needs and teachers' freedom to improve the curriculum at the classroom level need to be balanced.

KEYWORDS: Adaptation, Adherence, Fidelity, Freshman English, Implementation Approaches.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers' fidelity to the official curriculum was considered a way of ensuring effectiveness and for improving students' learning outcomes throughout the 1960s and 1970s (Cho, 1998; Dusenbury et al., 2003). However, the adaptation and enactment perspectives were developed later in the history of curriculum implementation (Snyder et al., 1992). Though fidelity of implementation (FOI) was believed to maintain effectiveness in implementation, in actual practice, a consistent FOI to the official curriculum has been found to be challenging.

There cannot be a curriculum that serves as a panacea to all problems experienced in all classroom contexts. Various motives urge teachers to adapt the prescribed activities to suit to the classroom context in which they are working. The fidelity approach emphasized the full implementation of curricular contents as intended by curriculum designers. On the contrary, the adaptation perspective allows teachers to adjust the contents of the designed curriculum based on the needs of students and the environment (Bumen et al., 2020).

Countries either follow center-periphery or bottom-up curriculum development models, depending on the political orientation of the country and professionals' theoretical beliefs. Countries that seek to bring performance similarities to various institutions develop a curriculum using the center-periphery model. They prepare and disseminate the curricular materials to all implementing institutions usually through a ministry of education or similar governing body (Graves, 2008). The practice in Ethiopian universities aligns with this center-periphery model. A group of curriculum "experts" designed the curriculum that is disseminated to all universities.

However, providing a well-designed curriculum to all implementing institutions, and ensuring its effectiveness and ability to boost student learning outcomes becomes

rather difficult. Shower (2010) argued that prioritizing the fidelity approach prioritizes organizational needs. This in turn disregards local needs and impedes the learning outcomes for students.

Moreover, focusing on fidelity hinders teachers' self-professional development and use of active learning (Shower, 2010), their creativity and thinking, and their decisions at classroom level (Cho, 1998; Shower et al., 2008; Shower et al., 2009).

Though there were criticisms to adhering to fidelity perspective, countries like Ethiopia have prepared curricular materials at the center and disseminated to implementing institutions. The ministry expected universities to implement the contents of the designed curriculum with fidelity to reduce implementation disparities among universities. Though teachers claimed to maintain fidelity, gaps existed between the official and actualized curriculums (Bumen et al., 2020; McNeill et al., 2018) as a result of motives manifested in particular contexts.

In an international context, there were studies on curriculum implementation in general, and English Language Teaching (ELT) teachers' fidelity to designed curriculum implementation specifically, using a qualitative method (interview). Locally, studies on curriculum implementation could be found using a survey method (questionnaire).

However, there was a paucity of research results conducted on ELT teachers' curriculum fidelity in an Ethiopian context. No research could also be found on motives that hinder ELT teachers' fidelity to the designed curriculum. Hence this study was meant to fill the methodological and area gaps on university ELT teachers' fidelity to a designed curriculum in teaching the freshman English curriculum at Ethiopian public universities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Lee et al. (2009, p. 837) defined fidelity as "the determination of how well an innovation is implemented according to its original program design or as intended." While Lee and Chue (2013, p. 2510) defined fidelity as "the closeness between the formal/perceived and the operational/experiential curricula." O'Donnell (2008, p. 34) explained fidelity as "The extent to which a user's practice matches the 'ideal' implementation of an intervention." Azano et al. (2011, p. 696), citing Mowbray et al. (2003), similarly defined fidelity as "the extent to which delivery of an intervention adheres to the protocol or program model originally developed."

The fidelity perspective of curriculum implementation, which is guided by the positivist world view, confines teachers to play the role of curriculum receivers (Shower et al., 2009). It leaves a meager role for the teacher in curriculum development at the classroom level (Shower, 2010). Fidelity also disregards differences in teachers' practices, institutional infrastructures, and students, which then influence teachers' actual practices (Cho, 1998; Ocak & Olur, 2019).

Moreover, it highly restricts teachers' flexibility in implementation (Iskandar, 2020). In a fidelity perspective, the degree of effectiveness of the curriculum can be measured by the difference between the proposed and the implemented curriculum (Ocak & Olur, 2019). The higher the percentage of fidelity, the more effective the curriculum implementation would be.

The existence of gaps between the designed and actualized curriculum could be taken as normal if it came as a result of adapting to the local context. However, because of various motives, there are teachers who try to rigidly follow the prescribed curriculum.

For example, Imran and Wyatt (2019) revealed the existence of English language teachers who implemented curricular activities irrespective of the needs and interests of their students. Fullan and Pomfret (1977) and Senechai (2020) stated that teachers who depend on the fidelity approach believe that good education comes through homogenized and standardized implementation of the designed curriculum.

On the same issue, Hongboontri and Darling (2020) emphasized the role of teachers in the fidelity approach as teachers who inflexibly follow a curriculum developed by designers. Datnow and Castellano (2000) also criticized fidelity as an approach that denied teachers' autonomy.

Moreover, Daro and Cohen-Donnelly (2001) showed the impact of sticking to the designed curriculum components in all instances. Rigidly following the designed curriculum limits consideration of environmental needs (for example, the needs of the students).

On the other hand, they also stated that too much deviation could limit the effectiveness of the curriculum. Backer (2001) unveiled the importance of adaptation as it gives ownership to teachers in curriculum development. However, Dusenbury et al. (2005) warned that deviating too much from the official curriculum may make the planned objectives unattainable to students.

Therefore, striking a balance between adoption (fidelity) to core elements of a curriculum and adaptation to local contexts becomes paramount, though how to find this balance is uncertain (James Bell Associates, 2009). Researchers use five dimensions to measure teachers' fidelity to the designed curriculum: adherence, exposure/dose/duration, quality of delivery, participant responsiveness, and program differentiation.

It is possible to study fidelity with one or more of these dimensions (Azano et al., 2011; Combs et al., 2022; James Bell Associates, 2009; Mowbray et al., 2003; O'Donnell, 2008). The adherence dimension is used here to study ELT teachers' fidelity to the freshman English curriculum.

Researchers assumed fidelity would be high during program adoption and that implementers would reproduce the innovation exactly as earlier adopters had used it (Cho, 1998; O'Donnell, 2008). This assumption was made since adopters were considered as passive acceptors and transmitters of an innovation, not as active modifiers of a new idea.

However, researchers later recognized that fidelity to a design curriculum was not always a given, rather adopters would adapt an innovation to suit their local contexts. In addition, researchers recognized that quite a lot of adaptation occurred in the classroom (O'Donnell, 2008), bringing tensions between fidelity and adaptation models around the end of 1970s (Cho, 1998). Therefore, studying teachers' fidelity to a curriculum, and the motives that hampered teachers use of fidelity would help the institution and teachers to amend the way freshman English curriculum has been affected.

Research question

The purpose of this study is to focus on teachers’ adherence to the freshman English curriculum and the motives that hinder ELT teachers’ fidelity to the curriculum, using Debre Tabor University in Ethiopia as an example. Hence, the study tried to answer the following specific research questions.

- What is the extent of ELT teachers’ fidelity to implementing freshman English curriculum?
- What are the motives that hinder ELT teachers’ fidelity to the designed curriculum?

METHODOLOGY

Research design

The study followed an exploratory mixed method design where the quantitative data was used to support the qualitative one. Hence, the qualitative design was taken as the main data gathering method. Since teachers’ classroom curriculum implementation approaches are influenced by the social, political, historical, and other specific local factors, taking a primarily constructivist worldview was appropriate.

Data Sources

ELT teachers were the sources of data in this study. Data was gathered from teachers who taught the freshmen English curriculum at least once at Debre Tabor University. Teaching freshman English served as an inclusion criteria for selecting teacher participants in the study. There were 14 male and 2 female (16 in total) ELT teachers who were delivering the freshman English curriculum during data collection time. It was from this population that samples for interviews and observations were selected.

Sampling of participants

Among the 16 ELT teachers, five teachers were selected based on a purposive sampling technique. Together with the department head, the five teachers were chosen based on their involvement in curriculum improvement at the department level. There was a committee known as the “curriculum improvement and assessment committee,” designated by the department. Though not all the five participants worked in the committee during the study time, they had the experience of acting in the committee before. The profiles of participants are presented in table 1 below.

Table 1

*Teacher participants. (*Names are Pseudonyms); HDP (higher diploma program) is a broad pedagogical in-service training program that was delivered to teachers chosen from any field of study*

Name*	Gender	Educational status	Years of teaching experience	on-service training/ in-service training
Paulos	M	MED TEFL	8	HDP
Seid	M	MED in ELT	12	HDP
Yared	M	MED in ELT	7	–
Rahel	F	MED in ELT	9	HDP
Dawit	M	MED in ELT & Assistance professor in ELT	15	–

From the five interviewed teachers, Paulos and Seid were chosen for observation using lottery system. The observation data helped to triangulate teachers' perceived practice with their actual classroom practices. Soon after the observation session, the teachers who were being observed participated in a brief post-observation interview.

Instruments

In the study, interviews, observations, and post-observation interviews were used as tools for data collection. Though interviews were the a primary tool, triangulating the data from interviews with observations considered to have a strong validity (Harachi et al., 1999) was also used.

– Semi-structured interview

The semi-structured interview was chosen as data collection tool. Semi-structured interviews are widely accepted as a tool that would proffer enough flexibility in articulating participants' perceptions of their fidelity in teaching the freshman English curriculum (Gray, 2009; Jamshed, 2014). Teachers' interview questions were adapted from Shower (2010), Shower et al. (2008), and Shower et al. (2009). The main interview questions were posed and follow-up questions used only when necessary. The time and place of the interview was decided by the interviewee. The length of the interview was 24-42 minutes.

– Observation

A series of observations were conducted, which provided robust first-hand information about how the observed teachers implemented the freshman English curriculum. The observations of the two teachers took 14 sessions to finish two units of the curriculum. Teachers had two contact hours in a week where one session was with 100 minutes, and the second had 50 minutes. The observation portrayed whether teachers have done the activities exactly as planned by curriculum designers, or whether teachers adapted, supplemented, or skipped activities or parts of the activities of the curriculum.

the semi-structured observation checklist was prepared and used in order to determine teachers' fidelity to the curriculum. The observation checklist was adapted from James Bell Associates (2009) and Mowbray et al. (2003) in a way that enables the observer to record activities done as planned, adapted, supplemented, or skipped.

– Post-observation interview

A brief interview was conducted after the observed teacher dismissed the class. That is, the observed teacher had two post-observation interviews per week, each not lasting more than 10 minutes. The purpose of the post-observation interview was to understand the observed teachers' behavior. Blessing and Chakrabarti (2009) and Gray (2004) have stated that observations can provide better data if they are followed by other data gathering instruments.

Reliability and Validity of the Instruments

To increase the reliability and validity of the research findings, the questions were reviewed by ELT teachers teaching in the same area at another university. Modifications were made based on the feedback of experts. Careful consideration was given to the instrument's design, administration of the intended tools, analysis, and interpretation. The verbatim transcription of the interview data was also made.

Data Analysis

First the qualitative data were transcribed verbatim. Then categories were made through reading and rereading the transcribed data in the way to serve the research purpose. Together with coding the relevant data, data that was not useful or relevant to the present research problem was bracketed and reduced. Though categories seemed to be mutually exclusive, data analysis was made by making connections between or among the various categories. For the supportive quantitative data, simple descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) were used to show fidelity vis-à-vis adapting, supplementing, or skipping activities of the designed material.

RESULTS

Results of the interview

Paulos, Seid, and Rahel confirmed that they took HDP training arranged by the university. However, they disclosed that the focus of the training was on general educational activities, not on ELT specific issues and challenges.

Moreover, the participants stated that they took the HDP training five years earlier and its impact had become obsolete. The other two participants did not take any formal in-service and/or on-service training after joining the university. Yared criticized the university for failing to set up professional development training. Dawit also disclosed that he did not participate in any formal in-service training that focused on English language teaching. In general, all teachers complained about the scarcity of relevant in-service training after they joined the university.

Concerning fidelity of ELT teachers to the freshman English curriculum, participants had similar approaches to the curriculum, of course, with varying degrees. All participants admitted that they usually adhered to the designed curriculum. They adhered to the contents/activities, sequence/order of the activities, and the assessment procedure as suggested in the curricular materials.

However, they criticized and expressed their dissatisfactions with the organization and choice of contents in the freshman English curriculum. Paulos explained that the students' language background guided how teachers adhere or adapt to the designed activities. Nevertheless, institutional motives forced him to stick to the designed activities irrespective of the needs of students. Paulos unveiled the existence of activities with less relevance to students. He added the presence of activities that took much time to deal with in the classroom.

Moreover, there were activities that were difficult to do in the existing classroom context, such as a large class size. For all such activities, Paulos stated that he used skipping as almost a sole strategy rather than adapting activities.

Seid also stated that it was the needs of students that shaped his curriculum implementation approach. He also criticized the lack of vertical and horizontal integration of contents of the freshman English curriculum with the contents students have learnt in secondary school. Seid's idea was also echoed by Dawit. Seid and Dawit believed that such contents should be adapted, but they preferred to adhere to the activities whenever possible and skipped activities that did not suit to the classroom context.

Like Paulos, Seid and Dawit used skipping as a strategy for avoiding activities that could not be done in their context. They focused on activities that they believed relevant to the current needs of students. They also disclosed the department's need as urging teachers to use the suggested activities, assessment types, and procedures. Dawit complained of the lack of student interest in doing activities other than grammar and reading. According to him, students showed greater interest in doing those activities where exams could be drawn. He went on to elaborate the presence of alignment problems between instruction and assessment.

Furthermore, Paulos, Seid, and Rahel criticized the high-stakes exam which has been used for placing students in different academic disciplines. That is, students' placement in various fields of study depended on the grade they scored in the first and second semester of their first year at the university. As a result, the same exam was prepared for students taught by different teachers. Hence, adhering to the designed activities has become the accepted norm in order to avoid students' complaints about teachers' implementation disparities.

The other institutional problem highlighted by Paulos, Seid, and Rahel was the assessment type ELT teachers follow in freshman English. They complained that assessments did not test what they taught. All the three participants stressed that students were tested on reading and grammar while the contents they taught included all language areas. According to participants, listening and writing were disregarded in the assessment.

Hence, there were alignment problems between instruction and assessment. Seid seriously condemned the institution as one that disregards the professionalism and teaching autonomy of teachers. He stated "I don't have the autonomy of assessing my students focusing on all language skills that I have taught." Rahel, on the other hand, stated that since she knew the assessment area, it helped her to revise the contents and prepare her students for the exam.

Moreover, Paulos and Seid (similar to Dawit) became aware of students' interest in doing reading and grammar activities. Both participants expressed that students were motivated to do activities on areas where assessment questions were drawn. Knowing the needs of students, Paulos and Seid tended to focus on reading and grammar activities. Paulos stated that when he did the listening activities, most of the students were not as interested as they were in reading.

Yared felt he had to follow the fidelity perspective of curriculum implementation. He went on to say:

Personally, I tried my best just to follow uh... what has been written there in the material, and there are conditions of course which force me to do so. As we know, freshman students are students who are going to compete with others to select their field of study, so personally I believe, if it is possible, all the students must learn the same topic and must be evaluated from the same content. For that purpose, uh I should adhere to the designed material. ...I do not like to act differently from other ELT teachers.

However, Yared acknowledged that he skipped some activities, particularly activities that he assumed would not to be included in students' assessment. He stressed that he did not skip reading and grammar activities because he knew that most of the questions that would appear in assessments would be from those two language areas. Though he

skipped activities, Yared believed that the curricular materials that are prepared at the center and send to institutes have better quality than those prepared by teachers at the university.

Yared also discussed teachers' lack of enthusiasm in designing the material in addition to the personal factors that affect teachers' classroom curriculum development (the experience, skills, and knowledge on designing curriculum). He also had reservations about teachers' willingness and interest of taking time to improve the activities of prescribed curriculum.

Rahel noted accountability was related to her adherence to the prescribed curriculum. She stated:

I don't want to be accountable doing something different from what the department has set to be done. So I usually do activities and assess my students according to the guideline prepared at department level. Even if I have the uh ...freedom of improving the curriculum, I could not take the responsibility of improving it. In addition, I may not have the required knowledge and skills to improve the curriculum prepared by the selected curriculum experts. Moreover, I did not get relevant training on how curriculum is improved.

She also added that it was challenging for her to ensure the activities she designed were better than the activities in the original material. She felt good when she did activities in accordance with the suggested sequences, methods, and assessment guidelines. In a similar vein, she stated that she focused on areas where exams would be drawn, sidelining other language areas. Rahel mentioned factors such as class size, shortage of time, lack of suitable listening devices, and student interest influenced her choosing to skip activities rather than adhering to the designed material.

Dawit questioned the skills and knowledge that ELT teachers have in adapting the curriculum (similar to Yared and Rahel's idea). He had reservations about the willingness and commitment of teachers to adapt the curriculum, and the skills, knowledge, and experience teachers possess in curriculum development and improvement. As a result, he stated, it would be better to follow the curriculum as it was originally designed.

Results of the post-observation interview

The onsite data from Paulos and Seid did not provide different reasons for teachers' adherence than what they provided during the main interview. Paulos gave various reasons both for his adherence to the prescribed curriculum as well as for skipping some other activities in the post-observation interview.

Besides adherence to the designed curriculum, Paulos skipped activities that could not be applied in large classes which made giving feedback a daunting task for him. He also added students dislike listening activities and prefer reading and grammar. Students' immediate need to score good marks also urged Paulos to focus on grammar and reading activities.

Moreover, Paulos explained each unit had many activities that were difficult to finish in a given time, so he chose to skip some activities and focus on others. Paulos believed professionals could improve the curriculum, but there is a risk of complaints about a lack of accountability as a result of implementation differences among ELT teachers.

In addition, Paulos indirectly raised the issue of vertical integration of content between first and second freshman English curriculum materials. He stated, “There is no difference between the two curricular materials of freshman English both in organization and in difficulty level.”

Seid, after a listening lesson, stated, “I wanted to address all the activities, but I skipped some of the post listening questions believing that they were repetitions of the preceding activities.” Seid reiterated that he was not happy with the curriculum since there was a lack of integration with what students have learned. He also stated that the curriculum emphasized receptive skills that made him prefer to skip some activities.

Students were another reason Seid preferred to skip some activities since students were not motivated by listening activities, and, at the same time, were not up to Seid’s expectations which also led him to skip activities. He noted that students were motivated by and active with activities on grammar, not listening. Seid also attributed to class size, lack of time, and relevance of activities as other factors that led him to skip listening and writing activities.

Results of observation

Two teachers were observed while they finished two of the five curricular units. Fourteen sessions were allotted to the contents of the two units. The observed teachers taught a large class of predominantly female students. While Paulos was teaching in a classroom of 56 students (19 males and 37 females), Seid was teaching in a classroom of 58 students (24 males and 34 females).

There were 76 activities required for students to complete in the two observed units. The observation's findings demonstrated that both Paulos and Seid have completed 51 (67.11%) and 50 (65.79%) of the 76 activities of the designed curriculum as planned. Seid supplemented 3 (3.95%) activities, focusing on grammar (such as conditional sentences) and reading activities (such as using the text “Housing in Britain” for students to identify topic sentences from each paragraph).

Table 2

*Observation data. *=Names are pseudonyms; f= frequency of activities*

Strategies	Observed teachers			
	Paulos*		Seid*	
	<i>f</i>	%	<i>f</i>	%
Activities that were done as suggested by curriculum designers	51	67.11%	50	65.79%
Activities that were adapted/modified	0		0	
Activities that were supplemented	0		3	3.95%
Activities that were skipped	25	32.89%	23	30.26%
Activities that were replaced	0		0	
Total activities that were observed	76		76	

As the table depicted, the percentage of ELT teachers' adherence to the designed curriculum was found to be 67.11% and 65.79% for Paulos and Seid respectively. It is also clear from the table that teachers' adherence to the curriculum contents was not as high as expected from teachers who depended on fidelity approach to curriculum implementation. The decrease in the percentages of teachers' adherence was the result of them skipping activities rather than using an adaptation strategy.

As it can be seen from the table 2, Paulos and Seid skipped a significant number of activities from the designed contents, 25(32.89%) and 23(30.26%) of activities, respectively. Teachers did not tend to replace the activities they skipped. They simply skipped activities could students' attainment of the stated objectives of the curriculum. Teachers were not seen taking time to improve the curricular activities that could accommodate the activities teachers skipped. In spite of skipping many activities, teachers were found to adhere to the sequence or order of activities and sub-activities suggested by curriculum designers.

DISCUSSION

It is important to mention the lack of formal in-service and/or on-service training opportunities at the university that enhance teachers' professional development. None of the ELT teachers received training on issues related to implementing ELT curriculum in a foreign context after joining the university. This could be one of the reasons teachers were dependent on the prescribed curriculum even in situations where the participants felt that the activities were unsuited to the classroom context. A lack of training to enable teachers to meet the demands of the moving world made teachers lean on a "teacher-proof curricula" (Cho, 1998, p. 28).

Teachers who require a designed curriculum have technical abilities and factual knowledge but were not equipped with methods of curriculum inquiry to face the challenges resulting from individual, pedagogical, and context variations.

As a result, such teachers are unlikely to improve their educational and professional growth (Cho, 1998). Suyanto (2017) also stated that in-service and/or on-service training are crucial components to enhancing teachers' knowledge and expertise in classroom curriculum adaptation. Shawer (2017) suggested the focus of the training should be on more practical aspects of curriculum implementation and on the awareness and roles of teachers that influence classroom behavior.

Concerning fidelity, the data from all sources clearly shows that ELT teachers adhered to the officially prescribed curriculum. Though fidelity was assumed to bring effectiveness in implementation, it has many pitfalls.

Teachers who adhere to the prescribed curriculum play the role of consumers (Hongboontri and Egerton Darling, 2020; Seneechai, 2020; Shawer, 2017). Bumen et al. (2020) and Ocak and Olur (2019) argued teachers who try to maintain fidelity to the prescribed curriculum do not take into account teacher characteristics, student differences, or contextual variations in their teaching (Daro & Cohn-Donnelly, 2001); Shawer et. al argued teachers focused on maintaining fidelity to a curriculum are less likely to improve student learning and motivation (Shawer, et al., 2008). Hlebowitsh (2005)

described the curriculum implemented as planned by teachers as similar to a script followed by teachers.

Teachers who adhere to the existing curriculum, ignoring the environmental dynamics, rarely adapt the curriculum to make it more relevant for students, hence they are viewed as lacking the desire for professional development (Verster et al., 2018).

According to Shaver et al. (2009), teachers who strictly followed the designed curriculum and skipped activities neither maintain the fidelity model nor modify the curriculum to suit the interest of their students. Hamdan (2015, p.104) also stated that adapting curriculum contents requires greater flexibility, creativity, expertise, and broader knowledge from not only “new teachers but also by veteran teachers.” Hence, teachers who try to adhere to the prescribed curriculum may lack all such necessary elements.

Though ELT teachers appeared to maintain fidelity, their adherence scores from observation did not reflect the high adherence score expected from teachers who follow the fidelity perspective. The decrease in adherence scores of observed teachers came as a result of skipping activities as the only strategy for dealing with activities that could not be implemented a particular classroom context. Teachers simply skipped a significant number of activities, including core activities (listening and writing) that could be vital in achieving the goals of the curriculum. Activities were skipped not because they were irrelevant, as stated by Shaver et al. (2008), but because teachers assumed those activities were difficult to do at that moment. As stated elsewhere, teachers skipped core components of the curriculum (for example, writing a paragraph with 100 words) and rarely supplement or replace the missing elements of the curriculum. This strategy would create opportunities with the missing curriculum objectives. Teachers who adhered to the designed contents and at the same time skipped activities focus on content coverage and neglect classroom dynamics (Shaver et al., 2008).

In answering the second question, many motives/factors were listed by the participants. The motives were identified by participants for both their adherence to the prescribed curriculum, as well as their connection to skipping activities. Challenges to teachers' adherence to the designed activities can be categorized as institutional/environmental, student-related, or personal/teacher-related factors (Shaver et al., 2009). Environmental concerns were found to be the main challenge for teachers in trying to adhere to the contents of the designed material. Among the institutional challenges, lack of in-service or on-service training, the assessment types, and the value attached to the exam were regarded by all participants as a main challenge to their adherence. The relevance of the activities was the second factor affecting teachers' adherence to the prescribed curriculum, followed by lack of vertical and horizontal integration of contents and then large class sizes.

In particular, the focus of the exam and the value of students' scores for placement were mentioned by all interviewees as challenges to adherence to the curriculum contents and activities. In situations where institutional exams serve other purposes, learning focuses on passing the exam (Shaver et al., 2009). Shaver et al. (2009) warned that exams used for other purposes tend to urge teachers to follow the imposed curriculum. This in turn leads to students disregarding learning or at least not internalizing what is taught. Moreover, Gibbs and Habeshaw (1989, p.23) stated the consequence of

assessment on students: *On many courses students are driven by the assessment system. What is assessed is seen as what matters most. The tasks which you assess and which count towards a qualification will receive ample attention, whilst those which are not assessed will often be ignored.*

Personal/teacher factors were also mentioned by participants of the study. Experiences and the knowledge and skills participants possessed were mentioned as factors affecting teachers' fidelity to the curriculum. This is concurred with the study by Clemente et al. (2000), which stated that pedagogic and curriculum skills were constraining factors for curriculum improvement. Commitment and the willingness of teachers to adapt the curriculum were seen as attributes of ELT teachers lack. Shower et al. (2009, p.136) also pointed out that teacher-related factors "might have been working behind the scene" Though they are crucial, teachers' experiences and level of education might not be able to help teachers adapt curriculum. In addition, student-factors, such as students' needs, interest, and motivation, played their own roles in making teachers skip activities that did not suit to the context.

Concerning the challenges, Carroll et al. (2007), Durlak and DuPre (2008), James Bell Associates (2009), Hill et al. (2007), and Pankratz et al. (2006) demonstrated that the institution was responsible for adjusting the challenges that inhibit effective implementation of curriculum. They also noted that institutions have to work towards correcting problems that came as a result of characteristics of implementers (teachers), students, and the support system (training and technical assistance) that affect teachers' fidelity. Smylie (1988) underlined that professional development training, which also included observation and support, was known to augment the capacity of teachers' curriculum implementation.

As clearly observed from the discussion, teachers were found to criticize the official curriculum material. However, they did not adapt the official curriculum to suit the material to the context of the classroom. Though this seemed paradoxical, it was the motives of the institution, coupled with other factors (teachers and student-related factors) that forced teachers to adhere to the designed contents. Teachers were also forced to use the skipping strategy as their main alternative for activities that they could not do in a particular context.

CONCLUSION

Though teachers have a similar educational background, they vary in their teaching experiences. However, the difference in teaching experiences did not yield differences in teachers' curriculum implementation since all participants tended to show fidelity to the curriculum. Teachers who opt to maintain fidelity are unlikely to be up to date to overcome the challenges of the fast changing world. This in turn led teachers be ignorant of their students' needs and interest. Teachers try to stick to the prescribed activities in order to avoid risks of any kind coming from anyone (students, institutions and colleagues).

Teachers' fidelity to the curriculum was affected by teachers' use of the skipping strategy. That means teachers did not adapt contents that they could not put into practice. Rather, skipping was used as the sole strategy of adjusting the curriculum to

the classroom context. This showed that teachers were characterized as curriculum transmitters.

Prescribing teachers on what to teach and how to teach impeded teachers from thinking critically. Giving priority to the institution and other authorities made teachers fixed to the designed curriculum material. Hence they lack flexibility and creativity in the dynamics of the classroom. Sticking to the ready-made materials sidelined teachers to the strategy of adaptation. This again made teachers ignore the professional role they could play in improving the curriculum. Moreover, teachers are preoccupied with improving students' scores or preparing students for examination. This encouraged student interest in activities where they understood the pattern that the department followed for assessment.

Attainming the objectives stated in freshman English curriculum was challenged because of the focus ELT teachers gave to some skills (reading and grammar) while ignoring or at least disregarding others, such as listening and writing activities. The implementation also reflected the problem of alignment between the intended instruction and the assessment used in the university. What should be implemented needs to be implemented, and what should be implemented should be assessed.

The attribution of institutional, personal, and student factors to ELT teachers behavior should be taken into account. Institutional needs must be carefully crafted and adjusted in ways that do not affect teachers' autonomy. Personal/teacher factors can be eliminated or at least be reduced by updating teachers using formal professional development trainings. Professional development trainings enable teachers to evaluate each activity of the curriculum for its practicality. Such trainings can equip teachers with the skills, knowledge, and confidence to adapt the material.

This study has implications for the teacher training mechanisms the institution uses. The knowledge and skills obtained at one time would eventually become obsolete. Therefore, teachers need to be kept up to date with need-based professional development training. This would help teachers to meet the current needs of their students. Teachers' autonomy must also be noted.

Teachers' freedom to improving the curriculum needs to be guaranteed without violating the core interests of the institution. Teachers do not need to take the department's guideline as a fixed rule in exercising classroom curriculum improvement. Institutional leaders (administrators at different levels) have to adjust the interest of the institution to the interest of teachers and the needs of students.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:

**ВІДНОШЕННЯ ДО НАВЧАЛЬНОЇ ПРОГРАМИ І ФАКТОРИ ЇЇ
ВПРОВАДЖЕННЯ ВИКЛАДАЧАМИ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ В
ДЕРЖАВНИХ УНІВЕРСИТЕТАХ ЕФІОПІЇ**

Це дослідження мало на **меті** вивчити відношення викладачів англійської мови до розробленої програми для першокурсників.

У дослідженні використовувався змішаний **метод**, де кількісні дані слугували для підтримки якісних. Якісний метод, який дозволив викладачам генерувати свої ідеї, які вони отримали під час реалізації навчальної програми з англійської мови для першокурсників, був використаний як основний дизайн дослідження. В якості інструментів збору даних використовувалися індивідуальне інтерв'ю, спостереження та інтерв'ю після спостереження. Для якісних даних зроблено дослівне цитування. Потім було зроблено класифікацію відповідних даних і виділення в дужках даних, які не стосуються цієї мети. Категорії могли бути взаємовиключними, однак аналіз проводився шляхом встановлення зв'язків між різними категоріями.

Результати показали, що викладачі англійської мови дотримувалися впровадження змісту навчальної програми навіть за обставин, коли програма потребувала адаптації. Однак дотримання викладачами адаптованої навчальної програми або офіційної навчальної програми було корельовано з різними факторами. Фактори, які вплинули на викладачів, включають такі інституційні чинники, як іспит з високими балами, проблема узгодження навчання та оцінювання, використання балів для студентів при розміщенні, відповідності і повторюваності завдань, а також відсутність підготовки з боку студентів. Особисті/викладацькі фактори (переконання викладачів, впевненість, знання та навички щодо вдосконалення навчальної програми) та студентські фактори (мотивація та інтерес) також мали значний вплив.

Можна дійти **висновку**, що викладачі упустили одну зі важливих професійних функцій, яку вони могли б задіяти під час реалізації навчальної програми – адаптація змісту з урахуванням конкретної групи чи курсу. Викладачам англійської мови слід запропонувати додаткове навчання щодо професійного розвитку. Крім того, необхідно збалансувати інституційні потреби та свободу викладачів щодо вдосконалення навчальної програми на рівні групи чи курсу.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: адаптація, прихильність, відношення, англійська мова у першокурсників, підходи до впровадження.

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OPPORTUNITIES FOR INTERCULTURAL ENVIRONMENT CREATION IN UKRAINIAN AGRARIAN UNIVERSITY

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**Marina BILOTSEKOVETS¹, Tetiana FOMENKO²,
& Yuliia LUSHCHYK³**



¹ *Ph.D. in Pedagogy, Associate Professor, Foreign Languages Department, Sumy National Agrarian University, Ukraine.*

✉ **E-Mail:** mbelotserkovets@yahoo.com

id <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4692-3444>



² *Ph.D. in Pedagogy, Associate Professor, Foreign Languages Department, Sumy National Agrarian University, Ukraine.*

✉ **E-Mail:** taniafomenko75@gmail.com

id <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3048-7097>



³ *Ph.D. in Pedagogy, Associate Professor, Foreign Languages Department, Sumy National Agrarian University, Ukraine.*

✉ **E-Mail:** YuliyaLushchychk@bigmir.net

id <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4306-1949>

ABSTRACT

*This study **aims** to highlight the significance of creating intercultural competence among students in Ukrainian higher education institutions (HEIs), especially in the context of European integration. The goal is to investigate the potential impact of Euro Union (EU) educational policies and the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU on students'*

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intercultural competence, and to offer recommendations for the effective implementation of intercultural education.

The **methodology** covers a comprehensive set of theoretical and empirical research methods, including the analysis of scientific sources, regulatory documents, an online questionnaire, pedagogical observation, and direct interviews with Humanities instructors. The research specifically focuses on 160 first and second-year master's students in the specialties of "Agroengineering" and "Electricity, electrical engineering, and electromechanics" at Sumy National Agrarian University, taking the course "Communications in the International Environment" during the academic year 2023-2024.

The **results** of the study provide a perspective on the attitudes of students toward international harmony, equality, and social values. The findings reveal that the students prioritize living without war and conflict, national security, and national greatness. However, the study also shows that there are challenges to developing intercultural skills, as students express less interest in an active social life, improving the welfare of those in need, and making decisions that affect their community. The pedagogical observation and expert evaluations underline the need for specialized training to enhance intercultural skills among engineering students.

The **conclusion** is that the study's dual focus on national specificity and international relevance offers actionable perspectives for educators, policymakers, and researchers. It promotes a deeper understanding of the constraints and opportunities in intercultural competence development to meet the demands of a globalized world. At a national level, the study highlights the specific challenges faced by master students in Ukrainian HEIs and the necessity for specialized training to enhance intercultural communication skills. Internationally, the research aligns with EU educational policies and Council of Europe initiatives, contributing to the broader discourse on intercultural competence in higher education. Recommendations include the incorporation of interactive teaching methods, fostering intercultural dialogue, and promoting a nuanced understanding of intercultural communication.

KEYWORDS: Cultural Diversity, European Integration, EU Educational Policies, Higher Education, Intercultural Communication, Intercultural Competence.

INTRODUCTION

In determining the fundamental goal of modern education as a part of the integral development of a person that combines all the components of the "cultural code" – freedom, humanity, creativity, morality, spirituality, emotional intelligence – it is necessary to note that a personality of culture in the modern world is not just a sum of virtues and standards of etiquette, but also the ability to realize one's individual abilities and intellectual and spiritual-creative potential for a high level of responsibility to nature and other people (Troitska, 2015).

The endless flow of changes in the current world requires not solely an intensification of work, competitiveness, ecological culture, tolerance, etc., but also opportunities to make some kind of breakthrough in the worldview and value system of coordinates. This process should be purposeful and organized by teaching a certain mode of behavior with the help of cultural and educational institutions such as family, educational providers, labor groups, national and religious organizations, public associations, and government institutions, etc (Muñoz, 2017). Educational activities should include cultural and social diversity among students and academics, and encourage intercultural learning and social readaptation.

At the same time, the realization of the possibilities of multicultural education depends on multiple conditions:

- The nature of the conditions in which pedagogical influence takes place.
- The potential and capabilities of all subjects of a multicultural and multilingual educational environment.
- The functioning of educational and cultural space.
- The unfolding of this space as a human dimension, in which humanity is the commensurability of each subject's being with the world, with other people, and with their own inner world (Coste & Cavalli, 2015).

This article aims to explore and disseminate the potential of the EU educational policies in light of the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU for the formation of Ukrainian HEIs learners' intercultural competence and experience. These are crucial for learners' active participation in a multicultural society and global labour market. These also nurture their intercultural knowledge and prevent misunderstanding or possible disruption in intercultural communication through:

- providing students with the fundamentals of culture, speech etiquette, social norms, and patterns of behavior of culturally diverse people to develop trainees' ability to hear and understand ideas of ethnic mosaic background;
- fostering learners' value-based competencies, namely respect for human dignity and human rights, encouragement of multiculturalism, and affirmation of democratic justice, impartiality, equality, and the rule of law;
- increasing inclusivity, diversification, and quality of intercultural learning opportunities that allow students to gain experience with various strategies of speech among culturally diverse people and their behavioral patterns, including openness to other cultures, beliefs, worldviews, and custom;
- encouraging public self-awareness, sense of responsibility, sense of self-importance, and resilience in the face of uncertainty;
- stimulating active citizenship through volunteering and intercultural learning, including experiences that allow students to acquire practical skills such as self-education; systematic, analytical, and critical thinking; the capacity for listening, observing, feeling, and expressing empathy; flexibility and adaptability; leading, organizational, and collaborative skills; and the ability to resolve conflicts.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A modern higher education institution, as a multicultural space, enables the mobilizing of creative self-realization of students, and encourages their self-development and ability to form peer-to-peer interactions with all participants in the cultural and educational space through the dialogic parameter of educational and cognitive activity.

The gradual integration of students, teachers, and employees of an educational institution, as well as representatives of state, political, cultural, and educational organizations and movements, influences the cultural and educational development of Homo Educandus. In the various directions of modernizing higher education, the implementation of a Europeanized intercultural approach is gaining substantial popularity in goal setting, content, organization, and management conditions of education (Bransen, 2021).

Historically, European societies are multicultural. Sometimes the movement and mobility of a population has caused certain tensions and conflicts, however, citizenry in the EU is based on such values as mutual understanding, intercultural and interreligious dialogue, solidarity, equality of genders, and harmonious relations on personal and national levels. The issues of overcoming intercultural barriers and cultural identity in education are not only the focus of scientists, but also relevant organizations such as the Council of Europe (Kuhn, 2015).

A number of declarations, projects, and programs were adopted and approved, namely:

- “Intercultural Problem in the Education System: Religious Diversity, Dialogue in Europe (2002)”;
- “Intercultural Education: Managing Diversity, Strengthening Democracy” (Declaration of the Standing Conference of European Ministers of Education, 2003);
- “Materials of the International Seminar on the Problems of Intercultural Dialogue in the University Campus (2008)”;
- “Living together in equality and dignity” (White Paper on International Dialogue, 2008);
- “Competences for Democratic Culture: Living Together as Equals in Culturally Diverse Democratic Societies” (Council of Europe, 2016);
- “Intercultural Cities Programme” (Council of Europe, 2016);
- “Languages at the heart of learning (2016)
- European Union Youth Strategy (2019-2027
- Model Framework for an Intercultural Integration Strategy at the National Level (2021)
- The European Declaration on Global Education to 2050 (2022).

Thus, the Council of Europe has affirmed that the intercultural approach to the educational space has provoked an open and respectful exchange of views based on mutual understanding and respect between people and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic backgrounds.

This approach assists in overcoming linguistic, cultural, ethnic, religious, gender, and social-economic barriers and enables constructive and democratic interactions on the basis of common universal values. This helps to achieve social harmony and prevent conflicts because it is necessary to introduce democratic management of cultural diversity in various forms. Furthermore, the intercultural scope strengthens democratic civil society and expands citizen participation, it creates and enhances spaces for intercultural dialogue, such as the European Declaration on Global Education to 2050 (2022), which has made commitments to education's contribution to international solidarity, human rights, global social justice, and sustainability and peace (<https://www.gene.eu/ge2050-congress>).

METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve the study's purpose, a combination of theoretical and empirical research methods was used. The theoretical methods involved analysis and generalization of the scientific sources and regulatory documents to determine the main issues of the research. These approaches allowed the authors to collect and summarize valuable points from scholars' contributions worldwide and enriched the authors' experience in fostering engineering students' intercultural skills.

Besides the specified theoretical methods, the empirical methods of scientific knowledge that were utilized to obtain data included gathering information from engineering students using Google Forms as an online questionnaire, pedagogical observations, and direct interviews with humanities instructors. The technology of for human values testing (Braithwaite, & Law, 1985) was modified and adapted for the needs of the study.

The pilot survey was conducted among the first and second-year master's students enrolled in agroengineering, electricity, electrical engineering, or electromechanics specialities at Sumy National Agrarian University (Sumy, Ukraine) (<https://snau.edu.ua/>) who took the course "Communications in the International Environment" during the autumn semester of the 2023-2024 academic year.

A total of 160 full-time engineering students participated. This training course and its participants were chosen because the course covers both foreign language and cultural aspects. The course included components in English and offered a module in cultural considerations for design components.

Moreover, the level of development of engineering students' intercultural competence was identified on the basis of pedagogical observation. The following intercultural skills of students were evaluated:

- the ability to distinguish general and specific in the culture of native and foreign-speaking countries;
- the ability to follow the norms and rules of behavior adopted in a multicultural society;
- the ability to establish and maintain communication with representatives of other cultures;
- the ability to navigate in situations of intercultural communication;

- the ability to overcome intercultural misunderstandings during communication in the form of “dialogue of cultures.”

During the pedagogical observation, expert evaluations were used to obtain better data results. The specified method consisted of an intuitive and logical analysis of the problem of developing students' readiness for intercultural communication. As part of the expert evaluations, a survey of lecturers of the Humanities (5 participants) was conducted. The interaction of students during practical classes and extracurricular activities was observed to determine certain changes in the level of development of students' intercultural competence.

RESULTS

In order to examine students' views on the importance of different factors in intercultural interaction, the authors implemented an opinion (n=22 options) based on the Goal Values and Social Values Inventories questionnaires (Braithwaite & Law, 1985). The students were asked to rate the importance of each option on a five-point scale: 1– Not at all important to me, 2 – Not important to me, 3 – Somewhat important to me, 4 – Important to me, and 5 – Very important to me.

Thorough analysis student responses to the questionnaire revealed that among the participants prioritized living without war and conflict (98.1%), national security (96.9%), and national greatness (91.5%). Most students valued international cooperation as well. Participants (65.7%) considered having all nations working together to help each other as important, with 15.4% saying it is “very important.” A large percentage of participants (89.6%) believed in greater economic progress and prosperity for the nation. The respondents also thought about preserving the natural environment, with 61.5% feeling it was important to prevent the destruction of nature's beauty and resources and 19.6% thinking it is “very important.”

At the same time, they were not ready for an active social life (98.8%), improving the welfare of all people in need (94.3%), or making decisions that affect their community (93.1%). Half of the students (51.9%) were unsure in evaluating their readiness to change the way of life for the better.

Furthermore, the analysis of empirical data from pedagogical observation showed that the majority of students had not developed intercultural skills, had no experience in intercultural interaction, and didn't know how to follow social norms and rules adopted in a multicultural environment. Only a small part of students had the ability to analyze and compare the cultural realities of their native and foreign-speaking countries to apply some speech etiquette formulas.

Almost unanimously, academics believe that engineering students, as part of the European integration of Ukraine, need special training for intercultural communication. The students' levels of readiness for intercultural interaction with representatives of different languages and cultures were highlighted. They assessed the level of development of intercultural competence among students as follows: average – 80% of respondents, low – 17%, and high – 3%.

Thus, the results of the conducted research revealed the problems faced by lecturers of the Humanities during the training of engineering students for intercultural interaction, as well as students' existing level of readiness for intercultural communication.

DISCUSSION

The results of the analysis of the pilot survey, which was conducted among students and academics of Sumy National Agrarian University (SNAU), indicated signs of value ambiguity – an uncertainty in orientations similar to “viewpoint vacuum” – in the answers. However, there was data indicating that students with an active life position, who participate in dialogue with representatives of diverse cultures, profoundly study foreign languages.

The outcomes of the pilot survey revealed the necessity of developing students' awareness of the benefit of including various cultures in the formation of their own value orientations, creating a balanced determination of personal development, realizing an individual's own initiatives when choosing and making fateful decisions, and “gravitating” to the conceptual understanding of life's problems and contradictions in contrast to the consumerist approach.

Currently, the students and educators of Sumy National Agrarian University (SNAU) are oriented towards academic mobility programs and projects. Cooperation with international partners is implemented in different meaningful directions using various organizational forms, including academic mobility, participation in international conferences, seminars, “round tables,” implementation of joint educational programs, and partnership in various international scientific and educational organization projects.

Academics and students of the university are actively taking part in the implementation of the European Union ERASMUS+ program and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). In the framework of the DAAD project “Support of German-language Educational Courses,” students and faculty interned and studied at the University of Applied Sciences Weinsten-Triesdorf, Germany.

International projects INTERADIS (International Students Adaptation and Integration) and UNICOM (Universities-Communities: Strengthening Cooperation) have provided academic internships with foreign partner universities in Lithuania, Italy, etc. These internships promote familiarization with the new tools from the best European practices in the field of cultural studies and intercultural communication. The mediating languages are modern European languages such as English, German, Polish, French, etc.

Intercultural communication affects the participants' communicative culture in the educational process. For its development, it is necessary to have appropriate conditions, such as: awareness of the need for the formation of a communicative culture, motivation of the actions of participants in the educational process, availability of basic communication culture skills among student, use of effective innovative teaching methods, in particular interactive business games, and control over the dynamics of the formation of elements of communicative culture (Byram & Wagner, 2018).

As the main pedagogical technologies that determine the effectiveness of the developed course, we single out the following: the use of forms, methods, and means of education oriented to the activation of educational and cognitive actions: a) seminars-

disputes; b) role-playing games; c) interactive technologies. We consider it necessary to use effective organizational forms of training that promote interpersonal interaction, such as: collective (interactive lectures, “round tables” and group (discussions and debates, case study, project method, intercultural trainings).

When studying the proposed course, special attention should be paid to the formation of intercultural strategies used by communication partners to establish and maintain intercultural contact. The aim is to overcome cultural differences and improve the quality of intercultural interaction. The following strategies should be used: making analogies, contrasts, generalizations, and comparisons of native and target cultures; interpreting of new aspects of the target cultures; observing culture when communicating with representatives of the target cultures (Holubnycha et al., 2021).

In this context, there is a crucial necessity to studying the process of students' intercultural adaptation and the European approaches that can be implemented by Ukrainian universities. This process can facilitate and support the formation of the physical and virtual intercultural educational environment (Bilotserkovets et al., 2020; Nagachevska & Kushka, 2023; Lushchuk, 2020).

It is essential to take into account peoples' overall capacity to encode and decode information appropriately in order to adjust to the host environment, as well as their capability to overcome culture shock in the process of intercultural adaptation (Byram & Wagner, 2018; Fomenko et al., 2019).

Some scholars (Lushchuk et al., 2020; Bilotserkovets et al., 2023) note that an individual needs to adapt to certain aspects of the foreign culture with temporary cultural contacts such as training, internships, participation in different international programs etc., to acquire certain practical skills that underlie cultural and deterministic behavior of people of distinctive culture and to understand the rules for social relations in that culture.

As potential problems can emerge because of the mismatch of norms, values, and peculiarities in the partners' backgrounds, it is relevant to find “points of contact” that link different linguistic and cultural bases. Moreover, aside from the lack of foreign language knowledge and skills, which can complicate intercultural communication, there is the issue of recognizing diverse psycholinguistic features such as cultural and spiritual aspects, which is necessary for mutual understanding among different peoples in a particular social or professional field (Fomenko et al., 2020).

Additionally, personal identity acquires signs of mature positivity when people integrate in the foreign cultural space. They are inclined to show empathy to culturally diverse people and are able to transform their own stereotypes. As “foreigners” perceive the elements of another culture, their self-esteem shifts from an exclusively cultural state to an intercultural state. This intercultural identity is flexible and quite mobile because it is no longer based on belonging to the original or foreign culture (Benet-Martinez & Ying-Yi, 2015; Lushchuk et al., 2021; Bilotserkovets et al., 2023).

Although international students' decisions about higher education institutions are influenced by numerous criteria, the most important one is the quality of education. This, in many respects, depends on learners' effective adaptation to the new academic environment.

This process, in our opinion, should involve all agents of socialization (family, educational establishments, national and religious organizations, socio-political institutions). For young people, the conviction that the uniqueness of their native culture, in comparing to social values, can be known and felt through the dialogue of cultures. The ability to equate and contrast the cultures of different nations and identify their peculiarities and common features fosters emotional intelligence, systematic and creative thinking, orientation to ethical values, and encourages students to take into account the ethno-cultural and religious characteristics of the individual as a carrier of culture.

Therefore, the promotion of Ukrainian educational services to the international market requires organization of international students' adaptation to the academic and cultural environment of higher education institutions as well as the preparation of Ukrainian students for participation in the academic mobility programs abroad (Banks, 2015; Kobzhev et al., 2020).

CONCLUSIONS

This study makes a significant contribution at the national and international level, as it addresses the crucial issue of nurturing intercultural competence among students in Ukrainian higher education institutions (HEIs) in the context of European integration. The novelty of this research lies in its profound exploration and dissemination of the potential impact of EU educational policies and the Association Agreement between Ukraine and the EU, as well as the presentation of recommendations for implementing intercultural education that resonates with the European discourse.

At the national level, this study sheds light on the specific challenges students face in Ukrainian agrarian settings, a domain that has received limited attention in previous research. The findings from the pilot survey conducted at Sumy National Agrarian University underscore the significance of fostering intercultural skills, including the ability to navigate diverse cultural norms, establish effective cross-cultural communication, and address potential misunderstandings.

Notably, the expert evaluations from Humanities lecturers and the survey results indicate a consensus among academics on the necessity for specialized training for Ukrainian students in the face of European integration. The training will enhance students' preparedness for effective participation in a multicultural community and ensure the success and adaptability of Ukrainian agrarian graduates in diverse and dynamic professional environments.

Internationally, the study provides insights into the broader discussion of the role of intercultural competence in higher education. By aligning the study with EU educational policies and drawing on declarations, projects, and programs initiated by the Council of Europe, the research establishes a bridge between national and international perspectives. This helps in understanding how educational policies and practices can be harmonized to promote intercultural skills among students in diverse cultural and academic contexts.

In essence, this study's findings, with a dual focus on national specificity and international relevance, offer actionable perspectives for educators, policymakers, and researchers both within and beyond Ukraine, fostering a deeper comprehension of the challenges and opportunities associated with intercultural competence development in the rapidly evolving landscape of higher education.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:**РОЗКРИТТЯ МОЖЛИВОСТЕЙ ДЛЯ СТВОРЕННЯ МІЖКУЛЬТУРНОГО
СЕРЕДОВИЩА В УКРАЇНСЬКОМУ АГРАРНОМУ ВНЗ**

Дослідження має на меті висвітлити важливість формування міжкультурної компетентності серед студентів українських вищих навчальних закладів (ВНЗ), особливо в контексті європейської інтеграції, дослідити потенційний вплив освітньої політики ЄС та Угоди про асоціацію між Україною та ЄС на формування міжкультурної компетентності студентів, а також запропонувати рекомендації щодо ефективного впровадження міжкультурної освіти.

Методологія охоплює комплексний набір теоретичних та емпіричних методів дослідження, включаючи аналіз наукових джерел, нормативних документів, онлайн-анкету, педагогічне спостереження та прямі інтерв'ю з викладачами гуманітарних спеціальностей. У дослідженні

взяли участь 160 студентів першого та другого курсу магістратури спеціальностей «Агроінженерія» та «Електроенергетика, електротехніка та електромеханіка» Сумського національного аграрного університету, які протягом навчального року вивчали курс «Комунікації в міжнародному середовищі» у 2023-2024 навчальному році.

Результати дослідження дозволяють побачити ставлення студентів до міжнародної злагоди, рівності та соціальних цінностей. Результати показують, що студенти надають перевагу життю без війни та конфліктів, національній безпеці та національній величі. Проте дослідження також показує, що існують проблеми у формуванні міжкультурних навичок, оскільки студенти виявляють менший інтерес до активного соціального життя, покращення добробуту тих, хто його потребує, і прийняття рішень, які впливають на їхню громаду. Педагогічне спостереження та експертні оцінки підкреслюють необхідність спеціалізованого навчання для формування міжкультурних навичок серед студентів інженерних спеціальностей.

Висновки полягають в тому, що подвійна спрямованість дослідження на національну специфіку та міжнародне значення пропонує практичні перспективи для освітян, політиків і дослідників. Це сприяє глибшому розумінню обмежень і можливостей розвитку міжкультурної компетентності для задоволення потреб глобалізованого світу. На національному рівні дослідження підкреслює специфічні виклики, з якими стикаються студенти-магістри в українських вищих навчальних закладах, і необхідність спеціалізованої підготовки для вдосконалення навичок міжкультурної комунікації. На міжнародному рівні дослідження узгоджується з освітньою політикою ЄС та ініціативами Ради Європи, сприяючи ширшому дискурсу міжкультурної компетентності у вищій освіті. Рекомендації пропонують включення інтерактивних методів навчання, сприяння міжкультурному діалогу та просування тонкого розуміння міжкультурної комунікації.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: вища освіта, європейська інтеграція, культурне розмаїття, міжкультурна комунікація, міжкультурна компетентність, освітня політика ЄС.

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FACE-TO-FACE TEACHING AND LEARNING: THE PROBLEM OF QUALITY

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**Liudmyla HOLUBNYCHA¹, Tetiana SHCHOKINA²,
& Natalia SOROKA³**



¹ Doctor of Science (Pedagogy), Ph.D., Full Professor, Department of Foreign Languages, Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University, Kharkiv, Ukraine.

✉ E-Mail: golubnichaya11@gmail.com

ORCID <http://orcid.org/0000-0002-8252-9893>



² Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Foreign Languages, Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University, Kharkiv, Ukraine.

✉ E-Mail: t.m.shchokina@nlu.edu.ua

ORCID <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8894-2216>



³ Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Foreign Languages, Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University, Kharkiv, Ukraine.

✉ E-Mail: n.a.soroka@nlu.edu.ua

ORCID <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8652-917X>

ABSTRACT

The article deals with the traditional format of teaching and learning from the point of view of its quality, in particular the advantages and disadvantages of face-to-face education in comparison with online training.

*The **purpose** is to check whether the classroom training process is of better quality than online teaching and learning on the basis of the real case of*

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teaching English at Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University. The **tasks** are to find out the pluses of offline training in comparison with the online format; to reveal the minuses of the traditional educational form in comparison with the online format on the basis of real teaching experience; and to check whether the pluses or the minuses of offline training have a greater influence on intermediate students' learning results.

The investigation **methods** are empirical methods (surveys, observation) and general theoretical methods (analysis, syntheses and comparison).

The **results** exposed the following: 1) benefits of face-to-face training: real-time interaction, improvement of social skills, collaboration, organization, motivation, accessibility, and better assessment; 2) cons of face-to-face training: processing a smaller capacity of programme material; problems with discipline; impossibility of listening to the lesson material repeatedly if necessary; problems with access to learning material from the internet; and the tendency of some students to have a psychological barrier to speaking a foreign language "live" in front of other students; and 3) the intermediate students' learning results demonstrated that offline students have worse academic progress than the students studying online.

The **conclusion** is that the minuses of offline training have a greater influence on students' learning results than the pluses do. In order to conclude which format of education is of better quality, it is necessary to continue investigating the problem.

KEYWORDS: Face-to-Face Education, Teaching and Learning Formats, Online Training, Education, Quality of Education.

INTRODUCTION

The long-lasting, destructive, and bloody war unleashed against Ukraine in the twenty-first century in the middle of Europe by the aggressive leadership of the neighbouring state has changed educational processes in the country significantly and launched a number of new pedagogical topics for research. These topics differ greatly (Holubnycha et al., 2022b; Kostikova et al., 2023a; Sytnykova et al., 2023) but all of them are connected to the search for the most optimal ways to provide quality educational services by Ukrainian education institutions, in particular higher education, in these exceptional conditions.

Today, the optimal ways to teach and learn in different parts of Ukraine vary greatly. In particular, the organization of the educational process in higher education institutions located in different regions of Ukraine differs depending on their distance from the war zone. The country has a large territory (603,628 km², which makes Ukraine the second largest country in Europe), and regions in the east and south of the country are temporarily occupied (about 20 %), so in this territory there are military clashes.

Therefore, it is natural that higher education institutions located in the specified territories have been evacuated to the safer western regions, where it is possible to teach students in university classrooms or by using a mixed format. In order to ensure the safety of the students and academic staff, those higher education institutions that are located in the territories close to hostilities provide online educational services.

In August 2022 the State Service for Quality of Education in Ukraine conducted an anonymous online survey among educators, scientific-educational workers, and students from higher education and vocational institutions. Its aim was to assess the readiness of participants in the educational process for possible forms of organizing teaching in the academic year 2022/23. The results were published on the official government portal. In total, 24,000 individuals participated in the survey, making its results representative and reliable.

Notably, among respondents representing the higher education system (69.4%), the majority expressed readiness to reinstate a face-to-face educational process in the stated academic year. Every tenth respondent reported that their educational institution plans to start the new school year with in-person instruction. However, a significant number of higher education institutions opted for a combined approach, with a rotation of in-person and distance learning interactions.

It is interesting that 80% of all respondents (students and teachers) consider the implementation of distance education effective during the state of war in the country (What, 2022).

It is also important to note that, despite Russia's extensive war against Ukraine, domestic higher education institutions continue to organize classes for international students and invite applicants from other countries, applying special admission rules for foreign students. This aspect confirms the importance of distance learning as a compromise solution for both sides.

However, it is normal for both students and professors to want to work face-to-face. So, in the 2023/24 academic year, several higher education institutions in Kharkiv (situated nearly 200 kilometres from the military clashes), which have deep and spacious basement premises and the possibility of converting them into bomb shelters with classrooms suitable for teaching and learning, offered their students the opportunity to study offline.

Thus, at Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University, where a certain number of classrooms were equipped in bomb shelters, almost half of the first-year students (49%) chose to study in a mixed format, with both remote (online) lectures and offline practical and seminar classes. The remainder of the first-year students (51%) chose to study online completely. So the teachers got an opportunity to compare different aspects of online and offline education while working in parallel: face-to-face and distantly.

Today there is a widely held opinion that online education is of a lower quality than classroom learning. Academic staff members' experiences of teaching may either support or refute this idea. So the problem under study here is rather topical.

Analysis of recent research demonstrates that due to the coronavirus pandemic interest in studying online teaching and learning is very widespread among scholars. Various instruments for providing online teaching and learning, as well as different methods related to the technology of teaching, were investigated by Holubnycha & Baibekova (2020), Chetveryk (2023), Hontarenko (2021), Akinwumi & Itobor (2020), Kolbina & Oleksenko (2020), and Nahaev & Hrynova (2020).

Another group of researchers considered the advantages and disadvantages of online education (Holubnycha et al., 2022a; Jackson, 2021; Manea & Gări-Neguț, 2021; Shevchuk, 2021). Some scientists compared the experiences of different countries in providing online education (Aksu, 2020; Nalyvaiko et al., 2021; Rebukha & Polishchuk, 2020). There are also works devoted to the attitude of subjects of the educational process to distance learning, with an emphasis on their psychological state during online teaching and learning (Holubnycha et al., 2021; Moralista & Oducado, 2020; Nariyati et al., 2020).

Nowadays, during the war, researchers are studying similar aspects of teaching and learning as those studied as a result of the pandemic. Changes in the educational system caused by warfare have been described by Anishchenko et al. (2023); Banyoi et al. (2023); Bohomaz et al. (2022); and Lavrysh et al. (2022). The psychological state of the educational process on subjects has been studied by Chaikovska et al. (2023); Kostikova et al. (2023b); and Tverdokhliebova & Yevtushenko (2023).

Investigation of these works has shown that they are dedicated to the specifics of distance education and reveal both positive and negative characteristics (Rajab, 2018). The advantages and disadvantages of both face-to-face and distance teaching and learning during the war were studied by Horbatiuk & Polishchuk (2022).

However, traditional forms of training usually were not considered in comparison with the online format in order to identify both desirable and undesirable factors.

Thus, the **purpose** of this article is to assess whether the classroom training process is of a higher quality than online teaching and learning on the basis of the real case of teaching English at Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University.

The tasks are: 1) to find out the pluses of offline training in comparison with the online format; 2) to reveal the minuses of traditional educational forms in comparison with the online format on the basis of real teaching experience; and 3) to check whether the pluses or minuses of offline training have a greater influence on intermediate students' learning results.

METHODOLOGY

The methods used for achieving this purpose and undertaking the tasks of the study were at both the empirical and general theoretical level.

Empirical methods included surveys of the academic staff (20 respondents) of the Foreign Languages Department of the stated university, who worked in parallel, both online (with 51% of first-year students) and offline (with 49% of first-year students), in order to get feedback about the received teaching experience, as well as observation of offline and online classes. This helped uncover failures in the organisation of face-to-face training in comparison with the online format.

General theoretical methods, such as analysis synthesis and comparison, were necessary to compare the aforementioned formats of teaching and learning and determine the reasons for the revealed advantages and disadvantages.

RESULTS

Face-to-face training has a very long history. It is the oldest format of education. It has been developing for centuries of human civilization. There is little doubt about the

effectiveness of such an approach, and it has had practically no opponents. But new methods and forms of teaching are always appearing, as well as progressive pedagogical technologies that lead to better-quality results.

When coronavirus broke out and online teaching and learning became widespread, scholars who investigated this style of teaching indicated its weak points and noted a great number of advantages of face-to-face classes.

Scientists insist that the benefits of in-person classroom teaching encompass not only the learning process itself but also professional-practical, social, psychological, motivational, and scientific aspects. Classroom teaching contributes to the development of key skills that are crucial for a student to make a valuable and active contribution in various areas of social life (Horbatiuk & Polishchuk, 2022).

Analysis of recent research has shown that scholars single out a number of pluses of classroom education:

- One of the advantages mentioned by the scientists is *real-time interaction*. Classroom teaching provides the opportunity for an immediate exchange of ideas and information between the student and the teacher, as well as among the students themselves. This is particularly important for those who learn better through collaboration and group work. Asking questions, receiving real-time answers, and completing tasks on the spot create a conducive environment for quality interaction among participants in the educational process (Nikolopoulou, 2022).

However, it is necessary to note that all the specified opportunities have students not only in face-to-face classes but also in online classes, using, for example, Zoom, Google-Meet, etc.

- Another significant highlighted benefit is the *improvement of social skills* through participation in classroom lessons. During classroom teaching, self-confidence and collaboration are developed. It is very important to state that they are essential for successful functioning in society. These skills include the ability to speak in front of a group, resolve conflicts, and develop oratorical and organizational skills (Yaremena et al., 2021).
- Regarding *collaboration*, group work is an integral part of the traditional learning process, and a lack of collaboration skills can impact students' professional competitiveness (Nogai, 2021).

To tell the truth, there is also remote collaboration and certainly it is possible online. Moreover, in the global world, online collaboration is widespread.

- *Organization*. The importance of this advantage lies in the availability of a clear schedule and set deadlines, requiring students to have time management skills and respect for the time and attention of others. Effective time management is a crucial factor in an individual's success, involving the harmonious combination of learning/work skills with personal time/family/leisure.

Beyond the regular lecture schedule, students sometimes find it challenging to self-organize, and online distance interaction and asynchrony add additional negative

elements that can impact the quality of understanding the educational material (Shelestova, 2021).

Moreover, we suppose that long periods of distance learning have significantly influenced students' skills in self-organizing.

- *Motivation.* The traditional atmosphere of educational interaction in the classroom serves as a strong source of motivation for students, contrary to virtual classrooms where procrastination until tomorrow can become a frequently occurring phenomenon. This applies not only to students but also to teachers, whose motivation in the context of online learning often escapes the attention of researchers. The traditional form of teaching creates an immediate orientation of “here and now” for the entire educational process (Shelestova, 2021).
- *Accessibility.* Face-to-face learning can be the most suitable method for those who avoid interaction with information and communication technologies or who do not have access to technical devices (Finlay et al., 2022).

However, this advantage loses significance in the conditions of armed conflict and global digitization, as discussed earlier. During periods of wartime, the maximum coverage for participants in the educational process is usually achieved through a hybrid format, where each student can choose a learning format that best suits their needs. But hybrid educational interactions raise numerous questions regarding the equality of knowledge, the development of competencies, the role of the teacher, and the tariffication of their work (how to ensure, simultaneously, two learning formats for different students), etc.

- *Better assessment.* Auditorium classes give academic staff the opportunity to watch their students all the time during lessons. First, they reduce academic dishonesty. Second, a teacher can better assess not only the student's activity and level of knowledge and skills but also how hardworking, diligent, or motivated the student is (Nikolopoulou, 2022).

Moreover, if the teacher notices that certain students need some help, the teacher can direct them or just support them.

All of these advantages are really essential and testify in favour of face-to-face teaching and learning.

However, the experience of teaching a foreign language in parallel online and offline formats during the first semester of the 2023/24 academic year allowed the authors to discover that both formats have positive and negative aspects, as well as to compare intermediate learning outcomes in order to determine which format provides better-quality education.

An oral survey of the academic staff of the University Foreign Languages Department allowed us to find out the respondents' general impressions about the peculiarities of offline teaching and learning organisation (influencing the quality of education) in comparison with the online format, and its influence on intermediate results. On the next step we revealed the weak points of face-to-face training.

Most of the teachers who went through the aforementioned experience pointed to the following negative aspects of the organization of the educational process in the offline classroom in comparison with the online format:

- In one double period (80 minutes) in the classroom, an academic group under the guidance of a teacher manages to process a smaller volume of programme material than in the same period of time when working online.

The teachers see the following as possible reasons for this deficiency:

- 1) the need to move to the bomb shelter when an air raid is announced (up to five minutes are lost for the entire group of 23–25 students to move). In addition, after the interruption of the class, the group has to readjust to continue working. Please note that in the online classes we no longer interrupt work during an air raid alert;
- 2) raising the general emotional background when performing game exercises, creative tasks, group work, etc., and the need to calm emotions after them, then gather and focus on more serious programme material. When conducting an online class using the same activities, students' emotions do not interfere with continuing work because all students are disconnected, their microphones are turned off and the emotions of one student do not affect the other students;
- 3) loss of time because students must go to the blackboard and return to their seats when performing certain tasks, while in online classes a screen is used instead of a blackboard;
- 4) the need to observe discipline (after long-distance learning during the quarantine and the year of war, students missed "live" communication with their peers), especially if students are not highly motivated to learn a foreign language. It is clear that there is no such problem in an online class.

Ultimately, it may be presupposed that consistently performing a lower volume of training tasks results in insufficient mastering of certain programme material.

- The problem of discipline in individual groups. Over the years of online education, students (younger student who had never studied in classrooms before) were not even used to the fact that during class one cannot walk around the classroom, leave it and enter it without permission, communicate with classmates, use the phone, eat, etc. Only near the end of the semester did students get used to the need to observe discipline in class.

It is natural that these behaviours take up time in class, distract the attention of both the teacher and other students, and hinder other students from concentrating, not to mention the fact that sometimes students do not understand the teacher's remarks and feel negative emotions, which can affect the attitude to the subject as a whole.

We consider the aforementioned shortcomings crucial to the perception of programme material by the student group. This in turn affects the mastery of the academic subject.

- When working in the classroom, students cannot listen to the lesson material again, whereas in online classes, students who missed classes or were distracted during them have the opportunity to listen to the class again in a recording.

Moreover, the possibility of listening to some difficult points of the lesson repeatedly can improve the quality of learning.

- Sometimes there are problems with access to learning information (if the internet is necessary). Notably, this happens more often in offline classes. Since in a face-to-face lesson all the students are at the same place if the internet connection is bad, this concerns everybody.
- In auditorium classes some students are embarrassed to speak English in front of the whole group. They feel insecure and afraid of the reaction of their classmates if they perceived themselves as being at a lower language level. There is no such problem in online classes. Probably these students feel more comfortable sitting at home. Maybe they do not notice facial expressions, gestures, and other nonverbal cues of their peers and this gives them a certain self-confidence.

We proposed that teachers express their opinion on all of the listed shortcomings. The results can be seen in table 1.

Table 1

General results of the teachers' survey about the disadvantages of face-to-face training in foreign languages

Question-Statements	Agree, %	Neutral, %	Disagree, %
Processing a smaller volume of programme material in offline classes in comparison with online ones.	85	10	5
Problem of discipline in offline classes in comparison with online ones.	65	20	15
Impossibility of listening to the lesson material repeatedly if necessary.	95	5	0
Problems with access to learning material from the internet.	90	5	5
Some students have psychological barriers to speaking a foreign language "live" in front of other students	75	15	10

It is natural that the aforementioned positive and negative aspects of the organization of offline training should affect the intermediate results of training (results of training during the semester—semester credit). Specifically, we have discovered that not all students in the groups that studied in the classrooms received a credit within the specified time. So, 10–15% of offline students had to finalize the semester's material and pass the assessment separately.

Note that in groups with an online form of study, although there were students (5–10%) who were lagging behind the group and had certain academic deficits during the semester, problems with obtaining credit on time affected only 0–5% of students.

Even if we admit to the possibility of academic dishonesty in the groups with the online format of studying, we have to agree that those students know what kind of information should be looked for, what is important, and where it can be found.

Thus, the intermediate educational results demonstrate that online students have better academic progress than offline students.

DISCUSSION

It is interesting to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of online and face-to-face training analysed from the perspective of student results, which are presented in most research. By contrast, we have studied the perception of these formats by the academic staff.

However, a number of scientists have found that, based on students' learning experience, face-to-face education has a wide range of shortcomings. Liyen Lim, Hen Toong Tai, and Yee Ping Liew (2023) found the following: students who are already familiar with the convenience and flexibility of online learning, state that online learning helps them more than face-to-face learning to manage their time and can connect students from different places easily. Moreover, they claim they feel more comfortable with online learning because they can interact with lecturers and friends virtually.

Nikolopoulou (2022) revealed the following faults of classroom learning, as defined by students: a more demanding timetable; minimal or no use of technology; less free time; distractions and noise in class; the danger of viruses spreading; lessons being lost. Two of these disadvantages (distractions and noise in class; lost lessons) were also named by the academic staff in our research.

Riaz et al. (2023) exposed such additional weak points of offline learning difficulty in waking up after the renewal of auditorium learning (51%); feeling tired (77%); feeling unhappy after starting offline lessons again (63%); and difficulties in getting to the college (45.8%). Considering different teaching and learning methods, students identified the following disadvantages of in-person education: difficulty with time management (52.5%); difficulty in concentrating (57.5%); feeling less comfortable (70.8%); feeling less alert (59.2%); and feeling less satisfied and believing they get worse exam scores (83.3%). Moreover, 85.5% of respondents would choose online learning and 71.7% prefer to follow the online format in future studies.

However, we are not sure that all of the listed points really contribute to improving the quality of education. In our opinion, some of the ideas are caused by the students' reluctance to overcome learning difficulties.

The results of an investigation conducted by AlMunifi and Alfawzan (2023) revealed a positive assessment of face-to-face learning by students. Specifically, they singled out better comprehension of learning material; the convenience of engaging in discussions; greater opportunities for seeking assistance from fellow students; fostering university life; easier interactions with academic staff and peers; the overall quality of educational experience; the ability to utilize downtime between lectures for collaborative work with classmates; and the development of social skills through communication and interaction with both peers and teachers.

Although, according to the authors, the students claim that they experience greater satisfaction and comfort in acquiring knowledge and learning through the online format and that this leads to improved exam scores.

We completely agree both with the advantages of face-to-face education and with getting better academic progress.

CONCLUSIONS

Thus, in the course of this study of face-to-face teaching and learning, with regard to quality, we have found out that:

First, there is no doubt that the classroom training process has a number of advantages in comparison with online teaching and learning, including real-time interaction, improvement of social skills, collaboration, organization, motivation, accessibility, and better assessment. What is more, both teachers and students highlight the pluses of offline training in comparison with the online format, assessing this form of education rather positively.

Second, it is natural that offline education also has disadvantages, including processing a smaller volume of programme material; the problem of discipline; the impossibility of listening to the lesson material repeatedly if necessary; problems with access to learning material from the internet; and the psychological barrier that some students have in speaking a foreign language “live” in front of a group.

Third, the intermediate students’ learning results demonstrated that students who were engaged in offline training had worse academic progress than the students studying online.

On balance, we believe that the minuses of offline training influence students’ learning results more than the pluses do. But we must assume that in order to conclude which format of education is of higher quality, it is necessary to continue investigating the problem.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:

ОЧНЕ ВИКЛАДАННЯ ТА НАВЧАННЯ: ПРОБЛЕМА ЯКОСТІ

У статті розглядається традиційний формат викладання та навчання з погляду його якості, зокрема переваги та недоліки очного навчання порівняно з онлайн навчанням.

Мета – перевірити, чи є аудиторний навчальний процес кращим за якістю, ніж онлайн викладання та навчання на основі реального досвіду викладання англійської мови в Національному юридичному університеті імені Ярослава Мудрого. Завдання: виявити переваги офлайн навчання в порівнянні з онлайн форматом; виявити недоліки традиційної форми навчання порівняно з онлайн форматом на основі реального педагогічного досвіду; перевірити, що більше впливає на результати навчання студентів: плюси чи мінуси офлайн навчання.

Методи дослідження мають емпіричний (опитування, спостереження) та загальнотеоретичний рівень (аналіз, синтез і порівняння).

Результати виявили: 1) переваги очного навчання: взаємодія в реальному часі, покращення соціальних навичок, співпраця, організованість, мотивація, доступність, краще оцінювання; 2) недоліки аудиторного викладання та навчання порівняно з онлайн форматом: опрацювання меншого обсягу програмного матеріалу на офлайн заняттях порівняно з онлайн форматом; проблема дисципліни на офлайн заняттях у порівнянні з онлайн заняттями; неможливість у разі потреби повторно прослухати матеріал заняття; проблеми з доступом до навчальних матеріалів з Інтернету; деякі студенти мають психологічний бар'єр говорити іноземною мовою «наживо» перед групою студентів; 3) проміжні результати навчання студентів продемонстрували, що офлайн-студенти мають гірший академічний прогрес, ніж студенти, які навчаються онлайн.

Висновок полягає в тому, що недоліки офлайн навчання більше впливають на результати навчання студентів, ніж переваги. Отже, щоб дійти висновку, який формат навчання є більш якісним, необхідно продовжити дослідження означеної проблеми.

Ключові слова: очна освіта, формати викладання та навчання, онлайн навчання, освіта, якість освіти.

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ENHANCING TEACHING: THE CRUCIAL ROLE OF EFFECTIVE PREPARATION AND DELIVERY OF LECTURES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Iryna HONTARENKO¹, & Oksana KOVALENKO²



¹ Ph.D. in Pedagogics, Associate Professor, Department of Pedagogy, Foreign Philology and Translation, Simon Kuznets Kharkiv National University of Economics, Kharkiv, Ukraine.


✉ E-Mail: irynagavrikova@gmail.com

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0411-2520>



² Ph.D. in Philology, Associate Professor, Department of Pedagogy, Foreign Philology and Translation, Simon Kuznets Kharkiv National University of Economics, Kharkiv, Ukraine.

✉ E-Mail: oksana.kovalenko@hneu.net

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3432-2601>

ABSTRACT

The article addresses the issue of identifying the most efficient methods for preparing and delivering university lectures. Despite being the oldest instructional approach, lectures remain widely employed in universities worldwide. However, recent pedagogical research by Ukrainian scholars has not fully explored this matter, hindering the development of practical guidelines for instructors aiming to organize and deliver effective lecture courses.

*The article **aims** to provide insights into best practices, methodologies, and strategies that contribute to the effectiveness of lectures, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes in higher educational institutions.*

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The following research **methods** were used to solve the assigned tasks: theoretical – analysis of scientific sources, pedagogical and teaching-methodical materials, comparison; empirical – generalization of pedagogical experience.

The **results** are the following. In the article we underscore the significance of establishing learning objectives, precise timing and structuring, reducing content volume, outlining lecture notes, careful selection of examples, and the lecturer's adaptability. Additionally, the authors highlight the importance of understanding the main stages of delivering a lecture, recognizing the nuances of maintaining students' effective attention, and involving them in active learning practices.

The article provides practical recommendations for lecturers based on the reviewed sources and the authors' experience, accompanied by precautionary remarks. These precautions include avoiding the simultaneous use of numerous types of illustrative material and an excess of visual aids such as PowerPoint presentations. Such practices can lead to cognitive overload, as different processing forms may interfere with one another.

Conclusion. The present study has explored the challenges and opportunities of effective lecturing in higher education, drawing on the insights from the British and American literature review and the empirical data collected from Ukrainian lecturers and students. Moreover, the article endeavors to conduct a more methodical analysis of efficacious techniques for preparing lectures, encompassing the critical stages of presentation. Furthermore, the present study seeks to delve into the nuances of captivating students' effective attention and involving them through practices associated with active learning.

KEYWORDS: Practical Recommendations, Effective Ways, Preparing and Delivering University Lectures, Goals, Timing and Structuring, Flexibility, Active Learning.

INTRODUCTION

Effectively delivering lectures constitutes a perennial challenge within the contemporary global landscape characterized by the rapid evolution of information and communication technologies. The compilation of academic courses by educators frequently brings about the challenge of orchestrating a compelling lecture, notwithstanding the availability of alternative pedagogical methods. As stated, "The lecture is probably the oldest teaching method and still the method most widely used in universities throughout the world" (Hontarenko, 2021).

Notably, the methodologies and tools employed by our Foreign Language (FL) educators appear to lag behind those embraced by their international counterparts. The extant pedagogical research within native sources fails to comprehensively address this predicament, rendering it insufficient for serving as substantive guidelines for instructors aspiring to achieve efficacy in lecture organization and delivery. This

discrepancy has propelled our investigation into this matter within the realm of foreign pedagogy.

The principal objective of this article is to succinctly synthesize and accentuate pivotal considerations aimed at augmenting the quality of lectures, as scrutinized by researchers from Great Britain and the United States.

One crucial aspect pertaining to the effectiveness of a lecture lies in its meticulous preparation. The initial phase involves the establishment of learning objectives for the academic course as a whole and for each specific lecture. As articulated, "Once you and your students know where you're going, the trip is easier and more efficient" (Chekhratova et al., 2022).

Prior to or concurrently with articulating these objectives, it is imperative to consider contextual factors such as the students' background (including age, ethnicity, gender mix), their predispositions (including hopes, fears, and level of interest), as well as their prior knowledge or experience with the subject matter or the lecturer. Additionally, the environment in which students will engage with the course information holds significance, encompassing considerations such as the size of the lecture hall, lighting and sound conditions, and the time of day (Hrytsenko, 2013).

Scholars from Berkeley University, California, advocate a structured approach to establishing learning goals, proposing the following steps:

- Answer the question, "What do I want my students to know or be able to do after completing my course?" (e.g., critically analyze a text, understand the causes of World War I, and so on);
- Revise your syllabus to match these goals;
- Decide what evidence you will need to prove that students have met the goals (e.g., certain questions on an exam, a research paper or annotated bibliography that meets particular criteria, and so on); and
- Make sure that every goal has a clear assessment. Mind that outcomes should be measurable (Hrytsenko, 2013).

The article **aims** to provide insights into best practices, methodologies, and strategies that contribute to the effectiveness of lectures, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes in higher learning institutions.

METHODOLOGY

It is necessary to explore and emphasize the significance of efficient preparation and delivery of lectures in the context of higher education. The focus is on how these aspects play a crucial role in enhancing the learning experience for students.

The following research methods were used to solve the assigned tasks: theoretical – analysis of scientific sources, pedagogical and teaching-methodical materials, comparison; empirical – generalization of pedagogical experience.

RESULTS

In higher education institutions, a lecture traditionally holds one of the most significant roles in the educational process. The term originates from the Latin *lectio*, meaning

reading, and its derivative *lector*, referring to a reader. This meaning is rooted in the historical practice by which, initially in Ancient Greece, Ancient Rome, and later in medieval European universities, the primary method of teaching involved annotated reading of texts.

In the modern era, a lecture serves both as an organizational form of education, a “specific way of interaction between the lecturer and students, within which diverse content and teaching methods are implemented,” and as a teaching method, a monological presentation of educational material in a systematic and sequential form, primarily focused on fundamental scientific issues.

A lecture (Latin *lectio* – reading) is a concise, logically concluded, scientifically justified, sequential, and systematized presentation of a specific scientific problem. A lecture should organically complement other forms of educational activities, serving as a foundation for deepening and systematizing the knowledge acquired by students through both in-class and out-of-class learning activities.

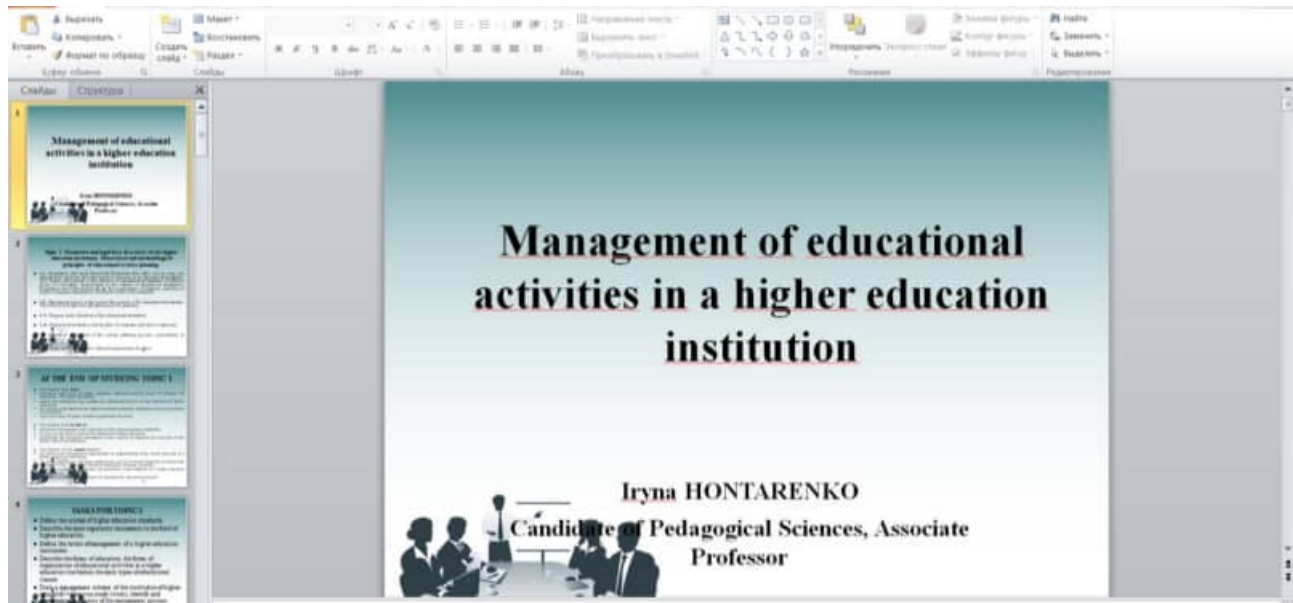
Consider the advantages of lecture-based teaching:

1. Economical concentration of information: Lectures allow for the concentration of information related to the educational content in a concise and economical form.
2. Rapid response to legislative changes: Lectures can adapt to changes in legislative and regulatory frameworks much faster than printed publications.
3. Compensation for lack of updated textbooks: Lectures can to some extent compensate for the absence of the latest textbooks and manuals.
4. Classification and commentary on diverse perspectives: Lectures enable the classification and commentary on trends, especially when there are numerous and sometimes conflicting viewpoints on a particular issue.
5. Focus on complex issues: Lectures allow the concentration on the most complex issues that may be challenging for individuals to grasp independently.
6. Development of listening and comprehension skills: Lectures contribute to the development of listening and comprehension skills, involving important cognitive operations such as analysis, synthesis, comparison, and more.
7. Direct contact and emotional impact: Lectures provide direct contact, emotional, and educational influence from the instructor to students, which no textbook can offer.
8. Integration of theory with practice: Lectures embody the principle of connecting theory with practice, showcasing the results of both individual and collective scientific activities.
9. Effective guidance for further independent work: Lectures are highly effective in outlining directions for subsequent independent work.

The example of the author’s online lecture from Ukraine to foreign students in English is presented in figure 1.

Figure 1

Introductory lecture on the course “Management of educational activities in a higher education institution (in English)” in Simon Kuznets Kharkiv National University of Economics presented by the author



Consider the disadvantages of lecture-based teaching:

1. Mismatch with modern professional trends: Lectures may not align with the contemporary trends in professional preparation, as practical expectations now include not only knowledge but also a greater emphasis on skills and abilities.
2. Encouragement of reproductive learning: Lectures may foster reproductive learning, hindering creative independent thinking. Subsequently, seminar sessions might transform into a mere repetition of lecture content.
3. Shift in the role of instructors: In the present era, instructors are no longer the sole source of knowledge. Independent student work with textbooks, the internet, and other resources is often more effective.
4. Passive role of learners: Lectures compel learners to remain in a passive position within the educational process.
5. Limitations in differentiated approach: Simultaneous communication with a large audience restricts the ability to employ a differentiated approach, making the lecture less engaging and beneficial for both high-achieving students and those with average abilities.
6. Time constraints: Lectures are time-regulated, and not all questions can be adequately addressed within the allocated time.
7. Potential for dictation-style delivery: Lectures can sometimes turn into dictations, where not everyone has the opportunity to fully comprehend the information presented by the instructor.
8. Overreliance on auditory analysis: In the absence of teaching aids, lectures engage primarily the auditory channel, while approximately 80–90 percent of individuals predominantly receive and memorize information through the “eye-brain” channel.

This psychological factor may result in a deviation from the principles of perception. Experienced lecturers recommend maintaining a manageable and realistic number of learning goals or outcomes, with five or six objectives being considered a prudent starting point (Kazak, 2018). The crux lies in clearly communicating to students the grading procedures, attendance requirements, policies regarding late homework, and protocols for missed tests, among other aspects, in writing, and distributing this information on the first day of the course (Blight, 2000).

Similar principles apply to setting objectives for individual lectures. A logical and effective starting point is to pose the question, “What do you want the students to know and be able to do at the end of the lecture?” Additionally, formulating guiding questions that the lecturer will address can optimize the instructional potential of the lecture. Displaying these questions as an overhead or using handout materials at the outset of the class serves as a means of assisting students in comprehending the nature and scope of the specific learning outcomes they are expected to progressively achieve as the lecture or session unfolds.

Accurate timing and the clear structuring of a lecture are integral factors contributing to its enhanced effectiveness. When planning a lecture, it is advisable to consider that it should not span the entire allocated time period. This is prudent for two reasons: first, it requires some time for the lecture to gain momentum, and second, students’ questions often consume more time than anticipated (Stynska et al., 2021).

The significance of clear lecture structuring is underscored by a majority of scholars as a fundamental principle of effective lecturing (Stynska et al., 2021). Experts from Waterloo University offer specific guidance on the process of structuring a lecture, emphasizing the following points:

1. Providing the “Big Picture”:
 - Explain how the lecture connects to previously covered material, course themes, and overall goals.
 - Begin the class with a brief review of key points from the last session and conclude with a preview of topics for the next class, including reminders about readings or assignments.
2. Introduction, Body, and Conclusion Framework:
 - Clearly articulate what will be discussed before delving into the day’s topics.
 - Summarize key points after covering the material to reinforce understanding.
 - Repeat key information during the lecture to aid student note-taking.
3. Visible Lecture Outline:
 - Keep the lecture outline visible for students, whether written on a corner of the blackboard or displayed on an overhead.
 - Return to the outline periodically to demonstrate progress through the material and emphasize key points.
4. Explicit Transitions and Mini-Summaries:

- Make explicit transitions between topics with mini-summaries.
- Link current material to previously learned content and future lectures.
- Clarify how one topic connects to the next, or ask students to articulate these connections.

5. Focused Coverage:

- Cover only a few main points in each lecture, aiming for depth over breadth.
- Present central points or general themes that unify multiple topics.

By adhering to these principles, lecturers can enhance the clarity and coherence of their presentations, contributing to a more effective learning experience for students (Stynska et al., 2021).

The selection of lecture material is a critical and meticulous process, underscored by a term introduced in foreign pedagogy known as “Content Tyranny,” which addresses a pervasive issue among college instructors. Mitigating this challenge often involves a strategic reduction in the volume of material covered. The authors of the concept propose that lectures should prioritize the following types of material:

1. Key points and general themes
2. Especially difficult material
3. Material not covered elsewhere
4. Examples and illustrations
5. Material of high interest to students

To address this, researchers recommend a methodical approach: instructors should review the syllabus, categorize each topic as “essential” or “helpful,” and subsequently exclude the “helpful” topics, relocating them to “suggested further reading” (Kazak, 2018).

An additional key element in effective lecturing is the practice of outlining lecture notes, avoiding the creation of a complete script. This approach, advocated by American colleagues, is deemed less time-consuming and enables instructors to maintain eye contact with students, fostering spontaneity. Professor William E. Cashin supports the idea of listing major points and underlining them with minor points that elaborate or explain each major point. Experimentation with different note-taking methods, such as detailed outlines, lists of major points, or tree diagrams, is suggested to identify the most effective approach. Lecturer’s notes should encompass key definitions, proofs, solved problems, examples, and analogies.

Careful consideration of examples is another crucial aspect of lecture organization. Relevant and relatable examples, especially those familiar to students, prove more effective than lengthy abstract or theoretical descriptions (Hontarenko, 2021). Including “delivery notes” for oneself is emphasized, allowing for additional notes about audio-visual aids, questions for students, and last-minute examples. The use of color-coded notes is also recommended.

Flexibility during the lecture is essential, with instructors encouraged to gauge students’ interest and confusion levels to adjust the depth and order of content accordingly.

Lecturers are advised to be mindful of the listener, presenting content in a listener-friendly manner using simple words, short sentences, and a conversational speaking style. Visual and auditory presentation of information is encouraged whenever possible (Stynska et al., 2021).

During the presentation or delivery stage of a lecture, special emphasis should be placed on the opening and closing segments. It is advised to steer clear of a predictable opening and instead capture students' attention right from the start. Dimming the lights and displaying the first overhead can be more effective in engaging students than attempting to quiet pre-lecture chatter through loud talking. Ignoring latecomers is also recommended (Stynska et al., 2021).

Initiating the lecture with a provocative question, anecdote, or current event related to the content is deemed more effective. Experts suggest alternative methods, such as asking a student to summarize the previous session, utilizing a question box to address interesting or challenging questions, or presenting a problem with the promise of providing the tools for a solution by the end of the class.

Regarding the conclusion of the lecture, a more effective approach is to plan to end five minutes early, allowing time for summarization, raising questions, previewing the next topic, and framing an approach for assigned reading. Researchers recommend avoiding the pressure to cover all material, as even experienced lecturers may overestimate what can be covered in a given timeframe. Prioritizing thorough coverage of a portion of the material is preferable to rushing through all of it, with adjustments possible in future sessions to balance content (Kazak, 2018).

Concerning the core part of the lecture, two critical considerations include understanding the nuances of students' effective attention and engaging them through active learning practices. D.A. Bligh, the author of *What's the Use of Lectures*, notes a decline in student attention and lecturer performance throughout a traditional lecture, with the effective attention span being 25–30 minutes.

Introducing interruptions, even brief respites, can have beneficial effects. Strategies such as inviting questions, posing simple-choice questions with hands raised, or assigning simple exercises for buzz groups can help maintain engagement (Kazak, 2018).

In the examination of cognitive theories, Stanford University researchers delineate three phases of the learning process. The initial phase involves selectively orienting attention, making it imperative for the lecturer to capture the audience's attention. In the second phase, individuals organize what they hear or observe into a coherent mental pattern or structure.

Accordingly, providing students with a framework for interpreting lecture material facilitates their understanding of new ideas. These first two stages contribute to the creation of short-term memory for new information. To transition this information to long-term memory, rehearsal and connection to existing knowledge frameworks are required. In the classroom, this final stage commences with review and application, extending beyond the classroom through well-crafted assignments.

A more comprehensive exploration of emotional means to capture students' attention is detailed in another article. Notably, the instructor's expressiveness and enthusiasm for the subject are identified as crucial elements. The concept of the lecturer's presence—

physical, emotional, and intellectual – is highlighted as a significant attention-grabber, with no additional gimmicks necessary (Stynska & Kondur, 2020).

Addressing the challenge of organizing information into a mental structure, the second stage of learning, can be accomplished by providing students with a framework for each lecture. Several approaches are suggested:

1. Study Guide:
 - Develop a study guide for the course that outlines each lecture’s objectives, key concepts, and questions to consider.
2. Lecture Handouts:
 - Provide handouts with the lecture’s major points to guide students in listening and identifying central elements. For instance, a method guide incorporating lecture notes can streamline information delivery for topics like the History of Great Britain and the United States.
3. Skeletal Lecture Handouts:
 - Distribute skeletal lecture handouts with space for students’ notes, potentially more effective than furnishing full lecture notes.
4. High-Level Questions:
 - Introduce each part of a lecture with a high-level question that the forthcoming information aims to answer.

Moreover, a lecturer should strive to be explicit about what students should focus on, incorporating variations in pacing and voice, pausing strategically before new or key points, and considering the use of gestures. Clear introduction of key concepts and definitions is crucial. Experts recommend employing verbal and visual cues to emphasize major points and categories. Additionally, asking students to review or explain the most important points can prove effective (Stynska & Kondur, 2020). These strategies collectively contribute to the creation of a framework that enables students to successfully identify core ideas in the lecture.

It is essential for the lecturer to be mindful of not overloading students’ memory, recognizing that students cannot immediately absorb extensive new information. Considering Bligh’s assertion that audience attention in a lecture diminishes significantly after 10 minutes of listening (Stynska & Kondur, 2020), incorporating short breaks and introducing formal activities or assignments every 15–20 minutes of presentation can help maintain engagement.

Summarization, in particular, can be useful to break the monotony of the lecture flow. Researchers advocate providing students with practice in note-making, emphasizing that students benefit more from summarizing, prioritizing, and making their notes personalized learning tools rather than mere transcriptions. Thus, dividing the lecture into discrete segments, both in terms of time and material (e.g., 10 or 15-minute blocks with specific topics), and subsequently asking students to summarize and make notes can effectively interrupt the lecture routine, rejuvenate students’ attention, and engage them in active learning practices.

Overloading students is a critical concern, and using too many diverse types of presentation materials simultaneously may exacerbate this issue. While lecturers often

incorporate audio, video, and written materials to capture students' attention, cognitive overload can occur when different forms of processing interfere with each other. Research by Mayer suggests that replacing written explanations with auditory narratives, utilizing a different sensory channel, is more effective when presenting illustrations. Thus, coordinating verbal instructions with other media and maintaining a reasonable pace are recommended strategies (Stynska & Kondur, 2020).

The final stage of the learning process, revision and application, can manifest in two primary ways:

1. In-lecture review and application:
 - Allocate time during the lecture for students to review and apply ideas.
2. Assignments encouraging review and application:
 - Provide assignments that prompt students to revisit their lecture notes and apply the content.

Various small tasks can be integrated during a lecture, such as discussing problems or issues in pairs, working individually and voting on a solution or position, reading extracts from handout material, creating charts, tables, or concept maps, asking and answering questions, giving feedback, performing calculations, prioritizing items, and more. Berkeley University experts suggest engaging in-class exercises, including breaking the class into groups to investigate a problem and responding randomly, passing cards with questions to generate discussion, and showing short relevant video clips (Stynska, & Kondur, 2020).

R. M. Felder proposes a range of in-class exercises, such as drawing and labeling charts, providing reasons for the usefulness of solutions, and brainstorming lists of reasons or possible solutions. Responses can be given individually, in pairs or groups, and sometimes worked on alone and improved in pairs (think-pair-share) (Felder & Brent, 1999).

In-class activities can also serve as a conclusion to a lecture period by having students write and submit a brief statement of the main point of the lecture or suggest improvements to the class. Felder notes that incorporating one or two active learning exercises lasting no more than 5 minutes in a 50-minute session can provide sufficient stimulation to keep the class engaged without disrupting the syllabus (Hontarenko, 2021).

DISCUSSION

Although extensive research has been carried out by international researchers in this domain, a more thorough examination of incorporating active learning into the lecture process in Ukraine is essential, setting the stage for future investigations. To sum up, the matter of effective lecturing continues to be relevant, and insights from British and American researchers provide a framework for future exploration. Further scrutiny into active learning, interactive elements in lectures, and the judicious use of visual aids, such as computer presentations, is warranted and will be the primary focus of upcoming research.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study has explored the challenges and opportunities of effective lecturing in higher education, drawing on the insights from the British and American literature

review and the empirical data collected from Ukrainian lecturers and students. The findings suggest that lecturing is still a dominant and valued mode of instruction, but it requires adaptation to the changing needs and expectations of the learners.

While significant research has been conducted by foreign colleagues in this field, especially in the UK and the US, a more detailed analysis of integrating active learning into the lecturing process in Ukraine is necessary, serving as an objective for future investigation. In conclusion, the issue of effective lecturing remains pertinent, and the experiences of British and American researchers help outline major directions for further study.

The utilization of active learning, interactivity in lectures, and the appropriate use of visual aids, including computer presentations, warrant more detailed analyses and will be the focus of future research. Moreover, the study of the impact of lecturing on student motivation, engagement, and learning outcomes, as well as the development of lecturers' professional skills and competencies, are also important areas for further inquiry.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:**ОПТИМІЗАЦІЯ ВИКЛАДАННЯ: КЛЮЧОВА РОЛЬ ЕФЕКТИВНОЇ ПІДГОТОВКИ ТА ПРОВЕДЕННЯ ЛЕКЦІЙ У ЗАКЛАДАХ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ**

Стаття присвячена проблемі визначення найбільш ефективних методів підготовки та проведення університетських лекцій. Незважаючи на те, що лекції є найдавнішим методом викладання, вони продовжують широко використовуватися в університетах по всьому світу. Однак останні педагогічні дослідження українських науковців не повністю

досліджують це питання, що перешкоджає розробці практичних рекомендацій для викладачів, які прагнуть організувати та провести ефективні лекційні курси. Щоб заповнити цю прогалину, ми розглядаємо праці британських та американських дослідників, узагальнюємо їхні рекомендації та виокремлюємо ключові аспекти для підвищення якості університетських лекцій.

Метою статті є ознайомлення з найкращими практиками, методологіями та стратегіями, які сприяють ефективності лекцій, що зрештою сприяє покращенню результатів навчання у закладах вищої освіти.

Для вирішення поставленої мети використовувалися такі **методи дослідження**: теоретичний – аналіз наукових джерел, педагогічних та навчально-методичних матеріалів, порівняння; емпіричний – узагальнення педагогічного досвіду.

Результати. У статті підкреслюється важливість постановки навчальних цілей, точного хронометражу та структурування, скорочення обсягу контенту, конспектування лекцій, ретельного підбору прикладів та адаптивності лектора. Крім того, автори підкреслюють важливість розуміння основних етапів проведення лекції, розпізнавання нюансів підтримання ефективної уваги студентів та залучення їх до активної навчальної діяльності.

Стаття містить практичні рекомендації для викладачів, що ґрунтуються на опрацьованих джерелах та досвіді авторів і супроводжуються застереженнями. Ці застереження включають уникнення одночасного використання численних видів ілюстративного матеріалу та надлишку візуальних засобів, таких як презентації в PowerPoint. Така практика може призвести до когнітивного перевантаження, оскільки різні форми обробки інформації можуть заважати одна одній.

Висновок. У цій роботі досліджуються проблеми та можливості ефективного викладання лекцій у вищій освіті, спираючись на висновки британського та американського огляду літератури та емпіричні дані, зібрані від українських викладачів і студентів. У статті зроблено спробу провести більш методичний аналіз щодо ефективних прийомів підготовки лекцій, охоплюючи критичні етапи презентації. Крім того, дослідження прагне заглибитися в нюанси ефективного привертання уваги студентів і їх залучення за допомогою практичних дій, пов'язаних з активним навчанням.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: практичні рекомендації, ефективні способи, підготовка і проведення університетських лекцій, цілі, хронометраж і структурування, гнучкість, активне навчання.

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STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS THE WAR IN UKRAINE

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**Ilona HUSZTI¹, Erzsébet BÁRÁNY²,
& Márta FÁBIÁN³**



¹ Ph.D. in Language Pedagogy, Associate Professor, Department of Philology, Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education, Berehove, Ukraine.

✉ E-Mail: huszti.ilona@kmf.org.ua

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1900-8112>



² Ph.D. in Slavic Linguistics, Associate Professor, Department of Philology, Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education, Berehove, Ukraine; Associate Professor, Department of Ukrainian Language and Culture, University of Nyíregyháza, Hungary.


✉ E-Mail: barany.erszebet@kmf.org.ua

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8395-5475>



³ MA in English Philology, Associate Professor, Department of Philology, Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education, Berehove, Ukraine.

✉ E-Mail: fabian.marta@kmf.org.ua

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5549-1156>

ABSTRACT

Purpose. Our research has been conducted in a region of Ukraine where no direct military operations have occurred since 24 February 2022. However, we have been living in the shadow of the horrible ongoing war; regular air raid alarms have had negative impacts on people who feel mental constraints: uncertainty, anxiety, anger, despair, disillusionment, and often hopelessness. Thus, the primary aim of our survey was to get deeper insights

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into the feelings and attitudes of our students towards the war in order to help them process the situation they have been living in.

Methodology. *We have applied the quantitative research method in our study. We designed an online questionnaire using Google Forms with sixteen 16 Likert-scale-type questions. It was administered online to college students aged 17–24, having 17 different majors. Altogether 194 questionnaires were completed and returned during February and April 2023. Descriptive statistics were calculated with the objective of providing a clear and concise summary of the data that would allow us to gain insights into the main topic under consideration, as well as to understand patterns emerging within the data.*

Results. *The findings suggested that students were mostly worried about the outcomes of the war. Students were rather informed about the happenings of the war, although about a third of the respondents claimed they did not follow the daily news from the front. A large majority of research participants were optimistic about the fast and positive ending of the war in spring 2023. In contrast, only approximately a third of the students were absolutely positive about the future of their native land after the end of the war.*

Conclusions. *Overall, it can be stated that the students' attitudes towards the war were rather optimistic. It is two years now that the war has been going on. The initial optimism of our students concerning the outcomes of the war must have changed during this time. Therefore, as a further research direction, a cross-sectional study is due to be performed in which we trace the shift in attitudes of our students towards the war in Ukraine and compare and contrast them with previous results.*

KEYWORDS: *College Students, Distance Learning, Online Teaching, Students' Attitudes to the War, Transcarpathia, War in Ukraine.*

INTRODUCTION

2020-2024 have been a real trial for people in Ukraine. First, the COVID-19 caused serious disruptions in the country. We had to switch to a method of teaching that was hardly known to us until then, online teaching, in order to reduce the danger that was lurking around us.

We started to investigate the issue of distance learning and all the related challenges for both teachers and students in our educational context, at the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education (ICIS TESOL, 2023); Huszti, Csatóry, et al. (2022); Huszti, Fábián, et al. (2023); Huszti, Lechner, et al. (2022); Lechner et al. (2022). We had barely recovered from the pandemic when another blow hit us: our country was attacked and the war began.

Since the start of the war in Ukraine on 24 February 2022, life in Transcarpathia has undoubtedly changed. Compared to other parts of Ukraine, Transcarpathia has been relatively free of direct military engagement. However, the region has seen a significant influx of internally displaced people from eastern Ukraine seeking refuge.

Transcarpathia has become a crucial hub for humanitarian aid to Ukraine. Numerous international organizations and volunteers are operating in the region, providing vital assistance to refugees and displaced persons.

Despite the challenges, the people of Transcarpathia have demonstrated remarkable resilience and community spirit. Locals have opened their homes and hearts to welcome refugees, providing food, shelter, and emotional support. Looking ahead, the future remains uncertain for Transcarpathia and all of Ukraine. The war's long-term impact on the region's economy, demographics, and social fabric is yet to be fully understood. However, notwithstanding the uncertainty, there is also a strong sense of hope and determination to rebuild and recover.

Amidst such circumstances we decided to conduct research among our students of the Ferenc Rákóczi II Transcarpathian Hungarian College of Higher Education, located in Berehove, a small town of about 20,000 inhabitants only six kilometres from the Ukrainian-Hungarian border. The rationale for our survey was to gain insight into how our students related to the war, what feelings and attitudes they had towards it. The survey was conducted about a year after the invasion, by which time the research respondents were believed to have formed their own position and views in relation to the investigated issue.

A great number of papers have been published on the state of tertiary education in wartime Ukraine since 24 February 2022, when the invasion started (Korniush, 2023; Lavrysh et al., 2022; Schulten et al., 2022). Some of them present general theses. For instance, Bondarenko (2022) analyses the challenges Ukrainian education experiences in these trying times. In addition to characterising the current state of Ukrainian tertiary education, Korniytska et al. (2023) propose that at present the asynchronous mode of teaching is the most realistic and practicable in a significant part of Ukraine because of the well-known obstructing factors.

Boyko et al. (2021) believe that in order to provide high-quality education at the tertiary level, distance learning technologies must be applied. This view is also supported by Banyoi et al. (2023), who claim that these technologies are the key to achieving success in higher education in wartime Ukraine.

This opinion is shared by Holubnycha et al. (2022), who write about the effectiveness of mobile technology in tertiary education in wartime Ukraine. The researchers carried out an experiment with 80 first-year university students in two groups, half of the participants in the experimental group and the other half in the control group. In the first group, course material was delivered exclusively via mobile devices, while in the second group only traditional forms of learning were applied.

A major finding at the 0.05 significance level was that student achievement in the experimental group had improved by 15%, whereas in the control group there was a 10% decline. This led the authors to the conclusion that mobile learning technology may play a crucial role in enhancing student achievement in the long run.

Westerlund et al. (2023) aimed to analyse online English teaching and learning experience in higher education institutions in Ukraine through pandemic and wartime. A mixed-method research design was employed focusing on social, methodological, and emotional aspects of education. Ukrainian university teachers of English ($N = 100$) and students ($N = 277$) were asked about their experiences related to the emergency

caused by the pandemic and wartime both quantitatively (via questionnaires) and qualitatively (through interviews).

The researchers found that the major wartime challenges for students were air raids and power outages and, consequently, disrupted communication and isolation, stress and a sense of insecurity, a large amount of homework, no access to the software, inconvenient schedule, and their own unwillingness, which might lead to academic procrastination. However, Cherepiekhina et al. (2023) emphasized that students cannot be blamed for procrastination. Rather, educators need to understand the difficulties that forced online learning might cause to students and should adjust course requirements as student conscientiousness is considerably reduced.

Kostikova et al. (2023) explore online teaching in Ukraine during wartime. A study by Kostikova and Viediernikova (2023) also deals with the problem of organizing online teaching in tertiary education. It presents details about the way online teaching is realized at a Ukrainian university during the Russian-Ukrainian war. An analysis of the challenges Ukrainian tertiary education participants have to face is demonstrated in a study by Galynska and Bilous (2022), who also discuss the efficiency of distance learning in higher education.

Baklazhenko and Kornieva (2023) compare online or blended teaching English as a foreign language during the pandemic and the war in Ukraine. They come to the conclusion that the blended teaching and learning format is most effective and beneficial for both teachers and students in tertiary education. Matviichuk et al. (2022) delve into the possibilities of organization of the tertiary educational process within the frame of e-learning. They also look into students' attitudes to the educational process in a time of war.

Students' attitudes to e-learning were also investigated by Budnyk et al. (2022). The authors presented it as a large-scale innovation. In addition, they characterized e-books and electronic teaching aids as useful tools in the teaching process.

We have found a study that deals with the influences of online learning on students and teachers (Opanasenko & Novikova, 2023), while Kurapov et al. (2023) write about the influences of the war on both students and teachers. They have concluded that the negative effects of war can be "associated with mental health, fear, stress, loneliness, burnout, and other related conditions" (p. 167).

Finally, Antoniuk (2023) speaks about the risks and losses in Ukrainian higher educational institutions that are experienced due to the war, referring to issues of security and preservation of infrastructure, human resources, and student body of the educational institutions.

As the above overview shows, a large number of studies analyse and discuss the tertiary educational process in Ukraine during martial law. However, very few look into students' attitudes towards the learning process. Moreover, we have found hardly any that consider students' attitudes towards the ongoing war itself and its psychological impacts on them. Thus, the rationale for conducting our survey is to fill in the gap in the academic literature on this issue and provide empirical data from objective analysis.

Therefore, the main **purpose** of the research was to obtain relevant information about our students' feelings and attitudes towards the war. Getting deep insights into the

issue was believed to enable us teachers to help students better process the difficult situation they had been living in, for we firmly believe that it is our responsibility to develop measures to stimulate students' self-organization and psychological support.

Thus, the present study aimed to reveal answers to the following concrete research questions:

1. What are the students' views concerning the outcomes of the war?
2. How do students keep informed about the war news?
3. How do students feel when hearing the war news?
4. What are the students' beliefs in relation to the future of their motherland?

METHODOLOGY

In addition to the theoretical analysis of the academic literature on the topic, we applied the quantitative research methodology and compiled a questionnaire to collect empirical data for the survey. In addition to gathering demographic information about the respondents, our online questionnaire contained three main blocks of Likert-scale questions, each of which was devoted to one major issue connected to the war. In this paper, the answers to the questions of Block 1 (General Attitudes) will be discussed.

We intended not to traumatize the psyche of our students and therefore tried to formulate our statements in a rather positive way. The questions inquired about the students' feelings about and attitudes to the Russian-Ukrainian war, about where they obtained information about the war from, and their hopes and beliefs in relation to the future of Transcarpathia.

Participants

Altogether 194 BA and MA students (among them 47 [24.2%] male and 147 [75.8%] female participants) completed and returned the questionnaire. The number of students by the age is presented in Table 1. The proportion of students studying in the daytime and the correspondence training forms was as follows: 114 (58.7%) daytime students, 64 (33%) correspondence students, and 16 (8.3%) studying in both training forms. A significant number of students (128 [66%]) stayed in Transcarpathia, whereas 24 (12.4%) students lived abroad and 42 (21.6%) students stayed partly in Transcarpathia and partly abroad.

Table 1

Age and Number of Research Participants

Age (years)	Number of students	Percentage (%)
17–18	44	22.7
19–20	87	44.8
21–22	31	16
23–24	7	3.6
Above 24	25	12.9
TOTAL	194	100

Procedure

The respondents completed the questionnaire online on the Google Forms platform in February – April 2023. They had to indicate on a scale from 1 to 5 how much they agreed with the proposed statements, where 1 meant ‘Strongly disagree’ and 5 meant ‘Strongly agree’, with a neutral option of 3 meaning ‘Neither agree, nor disagree’. After clearing the data, descriptive statistics were calculated with means and standard deviations to get a clear picture of the student attitudes in question.

RESULTS

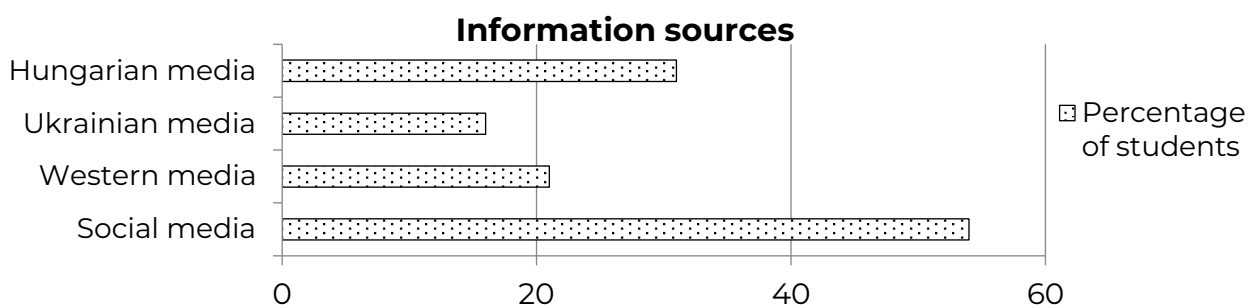
Block 1 of the questionnaire contained questions focusing on the students’ general attitude towards and feelings about the Russian-Ukrainian war. We wanted to understand whether our students were optimistic or pessimistic regarding the situation in the country. We formulated our questions in both positive and negative forms, with positive statements prevailing. Students were concerned about the outcomes of the war, as 62% of them were very worried and 13% were worried. An indecisive answer was given by 18% of respondents. Only 5% of students declared that the outcomes did not worry them, while 2% stated that they were completely indifferent (mean [M] = 4.29, standard deviation [SD] = 0.88).

We inquired about how informed our students were about the happenings related to the military operations in the country. About 38% of respondents did not follow the latest news about the war on a daily basis. A somewhat lower percentage of students (34%) claimed they listened to or read the news about the war every day, while 28% gave a neutral answer, referring to the fact that they sometimes followed the news, other times they did not (M = 2.99, SD = 1.07).

We asked about the sources of their information about the war. We were interested in what ratio our students were informed from social media, through official Ukrainian TV and radio, through Western media (e.g., German, American, or British), and Hungarian media. Fifty-four percent of students followed the war news on social media (M = 3.66, SD = 1.05). Hungarian media reporting on war news were actively followed by 31% of students (M = 2.69, SD = 1.27), whereas the official Ukrainian media were followed by only 21% of students (M = 2.39, SD = 1.20). The least popular among our students were the Western media, as only 16% of the students watched, listened to, or read them (M = 2.11, SD = 1.09). The remaining students were indifferent or paid no attention to the war happenings. Figure 1 shows the most popular information sources and the percentage of students who preferred them.

Figure 1

The Most Popular Information Sources Among Students



When asked about the end of the war, 82% of students were optimistic. They hoped the war would end soon. Only 7% of respondents were pessimistic about when the war would end, while 11% were indecisive in relation to this question ($M = 4.46$, $SD = 0.77$). Concerning whether the pre-war conditions would be soon restored in Ukraine, students were less optimistic, as 51% answered positively. A negative response was given by 30% of the students, that is, they did not believe that the pre-war order could be restored in the country. A neutral answer was given by 19% of students ($M = 3.43$, $SD = 1.33$).

In this part of the questionnaire, we wanted to ascertain the students' views on the sad events and consequences of the war. Every day we hear tragic news about the deaths of young people, a great many of whom are our kin from Transcarpathia; thus, 79% of respondents were deeply saddened by these facts, 11% were distressed by the news of these tragedies, 8% could not give a clear opinion, and only 1% of students were not saddened and another 1% were not at all concerned about these issues ($M = 4.66$, $SD = 0.55$). There was a divide in the responses to hearing war news: 5% were not at all concerned by sad news, 6% were partly interested, 20% could not formulate their clear opinion, 16% were saddened by daily war news, and more than half (53%) of the students were deeply saddened by it ($M = 4.06$, $SD = 0.99$).

Three quarters (74%) of respondents were confident that wise decisions would be taken in the near future to end the war as soon as possible, 12% were mostly confident, 9% were uncertain, 3% were not particularly confident, and 2% did not believe that decision-makers would find the optimal solution to end the war in the near future ($M = 4.52$, $SD = 0.70$).

The prosperity of our region was absolutely doubted by 5% of the respondents, 12% were somewhat optimistic, and almost a quarter could not take a position, while 22% tried to hope in a better future for Transcarpathia, 35% of students were convinced that our homeland had a prosperous future and that development would come without delay ($M = 3.72$, $SD = 1.04$).

In the last two decades, power outages in our region were rare. The majority of students participating in our research project grew up with secure electricity. However, in 2022 drastic blackouts occurred in Transcarpathia, impacting all spheres of life. Nonetheless, presumably taking into account the experience so far, almost half of respondents (45%) were confident that power outages would cease when the war was over, 29% were optimistic, 17% could not or did not dare take a position, only a few (6%) were trying to be optimistic, while 3% of respondents did not believe that there would be permanent electricity supply ($M = 4.92$, $SD = 0.82$).

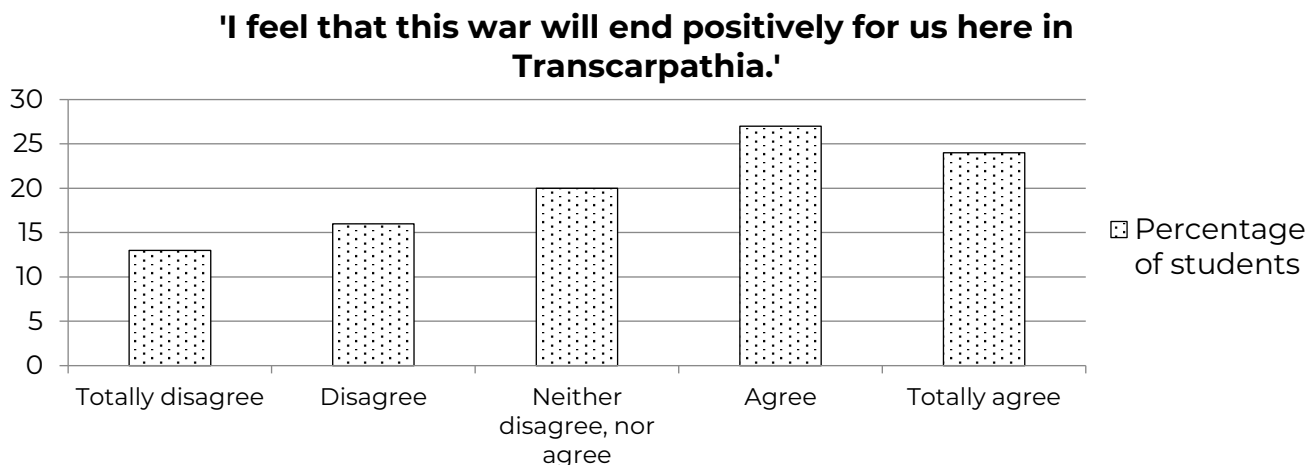
The statement "I believe that we do not have to wait much longer for peace" was reacted to differently by the respondents: 12% did not believe the war would end soon, 23% were trying to be optimistic, more than a quarter (30%) could not take a position, while 14% were trying to be hopeful and only 21% expressed true optimism ($M = 3.08$, $SD = 1.04$).

Respondents were evenly divided in their opinion about whether the war in Transcarpathia would end positively. Nearly a quarter of respondents (24%) believed that their homeland would prosper, with a similar proportion (27%) who could not give a clear answer, slightly fewer (20%) were optimistic, while 16% considered the

statement to be somewhat correct and 13% did not consider it relevant ($M = 3.26, SD = 1.13$). The results from the questionnaire concerning the future of Transcarpathia are presented in Figure 2.

Figure 2

Student Beliefs and Hopes About the Future of Transcarpathia



More than half of respondents agreed with the Latin saying ‘Dum spiro spero’ (Hope dies last, or While I live, I hope), 13% of respondents were mostly sanguine. Less than a quarter of respondents expressed uncertainty (21%), while the proportion of those who gave a negative answer and those who did not support the statement was similar (5% and 6%, respectively) ($M = 4.07, SD = 1.02$). Table 2 summarises the overall findings.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics

		M	SD	1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)	4 (%)	5 (%)
1	The outcome of the war in Ukraine worries me.	4.29	0.88	2	5	18	13	62
2	Every day I follow the latest news about the war.	2.99	1.07	15	23	28	15	19
3	I keep myself informed about the war through social media.	3.66	1.05	7	9	30	21	33
4	I keep myself informed about the war through official Ukrainian TV and radio.	2.39	1.20	38	18	23	8	13
5	I keep myself informed about the war through Eastern media (e.g., German, American, English).	2.11	1.09	47	16	21	11	5
6	I am informed about the war through the media in Hungary.	2.69	1.27	30	16	23	16	15
7	I hope that the war will end soon.	4.46	0.77	3	4	11	10	72

8	I believe that the pre-war order in Ukraine will be restored soon.	3.43	1.33	15	15	19	13	38
9	I am saddened by the news about young people who have lost their lives in the war.	4.66	0.55	1	1	8	11	79
10	I am saddened by the daily war news.	4.06	0.99	5	6	20	16	53
11	I hope that wise decisions will soon be taken to end the war as soon as possible.	4.52	0.70	2	3	9	12	74
12	I am optimistic that Transcarpathia will flourish again.	3.72	1.04	5	12	26	22	35
13	In my opinion, once the war is over, the power outages will also cease.	4.92	0.82	3	6	17	29	45
14	I believe that we do not have to wait much longer for peace.	3.08	1.04	12	23	30	14	21
15	I feel that this war will end positively for us here in Transcarpathia.	3.26	1.13	13	16	27	20	24
16	I believe that 'hope dies last'.	4.07	1.02	5	6	21	13	55

(1 = Strongly disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither agree, nor disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly agree; *M* = mean, *SD* = standard deviation)

DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the online questionnaires are organized around the four main questions that our investigation intended to answer.

- *What are the students' views concerning the outcomes of the war?*

The findings show that three-thirds of our research participants were concerned with the outcome of the war and that it worried them greatly. This reaction is not unexpected in the present situation in the country. An overwhelming majority of students indicated their hopes for the war to end soon. This proves how eager the students were to live in peace again in their own country. However, this hopeful attitude of the students was not reflected in the responses when asked about their views on how long they will have to wait for peace in the country, because true optimism was shown only by a little more than a third of the respondents. Here students demonstrated some pessimism. The means of statements (1, 7, 11, 13, 14) providing answers to Research Question 1 were high, mostly above 4, proving that students in general were positive, enthusiastic, and hopeful about the outcomes of the war, which is also supported by the low standard deviation values.

- *How do students keep informed about the war news?*

It is crucial to learn about daily news about what is happening in Ukraine, to keep informed and up to date about the events concerning the ongoing war so that we can be prepared for everything in time. Therefore, it is surprising that only a third of

respondents claimed they followed the news from the war front on a daily basis. This might be explained by many students being more concerned about their studies than anything else.

In addition, a self-protecting mechanism might have worked in the students to save them from even hearing the horrors from the war. Various media interpret the events diversely. In the digital age, it is easy to get information on this or that issue. Moreover, social media are very popular among young people nowadays, and they definitely play a crucial role in the life of students; therefore, it is not surprising that students were primarily informed about war news on social media. The highest mean (3.66) among the responses to statements 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6 aiming at answering Research Question 2 also proves the wide popularity of social media among our student population as an information channel.

– *How do students feel when hearing the war news?*

We come across the war news everywhere whether we want it or not: in radio and TV news bulletins, in newspapers, and on the internet. Every day, we hear and see news stories of soldiers who heroically defended their country and gave their lives for it. Often these soldiers were the same age as our students. Therefore, it is understandable why an extremely high ratio of students were saddened to hear such tragic news. Statements 9 and 10 were intended to collect data to answer Research Question 3, and the means of both were above the value of 4, proving that students felt distressed because of the war news. Those very few students who claimed they were not concerned about the war news and the tragic death of defenders of the homeland simply showed indifference to a question of great significance.

– *What are the students' beliefs concerning the future of their motherland?*

In general, students were optimistic and hopeful about the future of their country and Transcarpathia in particular. A great many students believed that the war would end soon and that the stakeholders would make wise decisions to help the country overcome the difficulties. Approximately a year after the outbreak of the war, our student respondents were still very positive about the outcomes of the war and were brave to claim that their homeland would prosper after the conclusion of this horror.

This was supported by the majority of participants who declared that 'Dum spiro, spero', or 'While I live, I hope'. The mean values above 3 among the answers to the statements 8, 12, 15, and 16 aiming to answer Research Question 4 prove that our respondents were rather optimistic about this question.

– *Implications of the findings*

Our research findings refer to the following pedagogical implications:

1. Teachers need to help students process the difficult situation they have been living in.
2. Teachers need to develop methods and means for providing psychological support for students.
3. Teachers need to develop measures to stimulate students' self-organization.

As a next phase in our investigation of the war effects on tertiary students' educational processes, a cross-sectional study will trace the alteration of student attitudes towards the war in Ukraine. The findings will be compared and contrasted with previous results. Another possible research direction may investigate what impact the experience of the war has had on students' academic achievement.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research findings we have come to the conclusion that our students were deeply concerned with the possible outcomes of the war. Although some students showed a pessimistic attitude, most of them expressed their hope and optimism towards the future of the homeland.

In the course of our survey, the importance and influential role of social media were emphasized as the students kept informed about the war news primarily via these means of information, which are one of the most popular channels of information among young people. The daily news from the front line of the war shocked the students. Nevertheless, they tried to be optimistic and hopeful as to the outcomes of the war and the future prosperity of the country.

Nobody is in the know about when the war will end and peace will come to us. One thing is certain: we must be optimistic about the future and trust that everything will turn out well. We have to nurture this confidence in our students, too, because as the Latin proverb says, 'While I live, I hope'.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:**СТАВЛЕННЯ СТУДЕНТІВ ДО ВІЙНИ В УКРАЇНІ**

Мета. Дослідження проводилось в одному з регіонів України, де з 24 лютого 2022 року не ведуться безпосередні бойові дії. Однак ми живемо в умовах жакливої війни, яка й надалі триває, з регулярними повітряними тривогами, що негативно впливають на людей і спричиняють важке психічне навантаження: невпевненість, тривогу,

злість, відчай, зневіру, розчарування, безнадійність. Таким чином, основною метою нашого опитування було глибше зрозуміти почуття і ставлення здобувачів вищої освіти нашого закладу до війни для того, щоб допомогти їм впоратися з ситуацією, в якій вони опинилися.

Методологія. У дослідженні застосовано кількісний метод дослідження. В якості знаряддя дослідження розроблено онлайн-анкету з використанням Google Forms з шістнадцятьма питаннями типу шкали Лайкерта. Опитування проводилося у форматі онлайн серед здобувачів закладу вищої освіти віком від 17 до 24 років, які навчаються на сімнадцяти різних спеціальностях. Загалом було заповнено 194 анкети протягом лютого-квітня 2023 року. Описову статистику використано з метою чіткого і стислого узагальнення даних, що дозволило отримати глибше розуміння основної теми, а також зрозуміти закономірності, що впливають із цих даних.

Результати. Результати дослідження показали, що студентів найбільше турбують наслідки війни. Вони досить поінформовані про хід війни, хоча близько третини респондентів стверджували, що не слідкують за щоденними новинами про ситуацію в державі. Переважна більшість учасників дослідження були оптимістично налаштовані навесні 2023 року щодо швидкого та позитивного завершення війни. На противагу цьому, лише близько третини студентів були абсолютно позитивно налаштовані щодо майбутнього своєї рідної країни після закінчення війни.

Висновки. У цілому можна зазначити, що переважна більшість респондентів оптимістично налаштовані щодо майбутнього. Початковий оптимізм респондентів стосовно наслідків війни за цей час очевидно змінився. Тому в якості подальшого напрямку дослідження заплановано проведення дослідження поперечного перерізу, в якому ми могли б простежити зміни у ставленні наших студентів до наслідків війни в Україні та зіставити їх з попередніми результатами.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: війна в Україні, дистанційне навчання, Закарпаття, онлайн навчання, ставлення студентів до війни, студенти закладу вищої освіти.

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THE IMPACT OF REMEDIAL CLASSES ON THE PERFORMANCE OF GRADE 7 LEARNERS IN MATHEMATICS USING THE PROJECT TAPPIK

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**Jeffrey P. MANDAGDAG¹, Ryan R. GOLEZ²,
& Baby Glenn D. CLOSA³**



¹ *Master of Education in Supervision and Administration, Mathematics Teacher, School LIS Coordinator, Los Banos National High School – Poblacion, DepEd-Laguna, District of Los Banos, Philippines.*

✉ E-Mail: jepzonmandagdag@gmail.com

ORCID <https://orcid.org/0009-0000-2490-3202>



² *Mathematics Teacher, School NIT2L Coordinator, Los Banos National High School – Poblacion, DepEd-Laguna, District of Los Banos, Philippines.*

✉ E-Mail: ryan.golez@deped.gov.ph

ORCID <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-3581-5555>



³ *English Teacher, School Reading Program Coordinator, School librarian, Los Banos National High School – Poblacion, DepEd-Laguna, District of Los Banos, Philippines.*

✉ E-Mail: babyglenn.closa@deped.gov.ph

ORCID <https://orcid.org/0009-0009-4916-3971>

ABSTRACT

Purpose. *This research was designed to determine the impact of remedial classes on the performance of Grade 7 Learners in Mathematics using Project TAPPIK (the abbreviation in the national language – Tanging Aksyon sa*

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Pagbasa, Pagsulat, at Pagbilang para langat ang Karunungan) in the Philippines.

Methodology. *This research employed mixed mode research methodology, which compromised qualitative and quantitative research methods. They were seventy-two Grade 7 Low-Numerate learner participants in the study. They were identified through results of NIT2L (Numeracy Intervention Tool for Laguna Learners) Pre-Test and Post-Test assessment tool by students currently enrolled for the school year 2022-2023. The research instrument consisted of three parts. Part I was to administer pre-test and post-test of the NIT2L assessment tool to the Grade 7 learners to identify the Low-Numerates. Parental consent was secured from the identified learners. Part II of the research instrument was the conduct of orientation to the learners and parents regarding the remedial classes on the numeracy program. Part III of the research instrument was conducted during the remedial classes, reviewing the teacher distributed and the teacher-made learning materials to assess the Grade 7 Low-Numerates understanding and comprehension of (1) four fundamental operations on whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and integers; (2) translating algebraic expressions into a mathematical sentence; (3) solving problems involving basic geometry and polygons.*

Results. *Most of the 7th Grade learners were 12-13 years old. The changes in the attitude of 7th Grade low level (Low-Numerate) learners toward learning Mathematics during their remedial classes showed that the learners' attitude is: the (a) enjoyment, it seemed that the respondents for the offered statements had verbal interpretations as "ALWAYS" answer or 4.58 mean in enjoying solving Math problems whenever they saw them, (b) the fear, anxiety, and distress revealed that "ABOUT HALF OF THE TIME" answer with an area was 3.023; "MOST OF THE TIME" answer – they thought Math was confusing. The use of Mathematics in everyday life they "ALWAYS" believed that the knowledge they got in Math class would be useful in life with a mean of 4.30. The perceived Mathematics achievement, they "ALWAYS" saw themselves as a successful student in Math had a mean of 4.22.*

Conclusions. *The interventions/teaching strategies that gave impact the Grade 7 Low-Numerate learners in improving their numeracy performance significantly improved their scores.*

KEYWORDS: *Attitude, Literacy, Low-Numerate, Mathematics, Numeracy, Learners.*

INTRODUCTION

The journey of this research in implementing strategies and relevant approaches despite the test of the pandemic was clearly mapped out in the BE-LRCP (Basic Education-Learning Recovery Program). It affirms its commitment of bringing out excellence in everyone with the school learning recovery and continuity plan in literacy and numeracy. To achieve this, the researchers developed intervention materials on numeracy and applied the NIT2L (Numeracy Intervention Tool for Laguna Learners) validated materials to the 242 learners of Grade 7.

The research is conducted on the whole population which was selected by team work of

the remedial classes program every Friday. The population was selected according to the following criteria (1) student performance in their grade according to their teacher's assessment and opinion, (2) low achievers with learning difficulties in numeracy, reading, and comprehension.

The remedial classes program is one of the teacher creativity center programs which are provided for children who have learning problems or difficulties that prevent them from mastering basic skills in numeracy, reading, and comprehension.

On February 2, 2023 our Vice President and DepEd Secretary Sara Z. Duterte emphasized, "The improvement of literacy and numeracy programs and the integration of 'peace competencies' will be some of the priorities of the Department of Education (DepEd) in making the K to 12 curriculum relevant to produce job-ready, active and responsible citizens."

Also, she noted that the Department will revitalize its Reading, Science and Technology, and Math programs as part of the *MATATAG: Bansang Makabata, Batang Makabansa* agenda. It is proposed that this research will enhance the numeracy of Grade 7 Low-Numerates for this school year 2022-2023. Also, to know the impact of remedial classes of learning intervention materials to the performance of Grade 7 Learners.

This research's results may help us consider teaching strategies or learning materials in improving low numerate learners in Grade 7, assess the learners' performance, and better focus corrective action on challenging factors in numeracy-remedial classes.

The **purpose** of this research is to determine the impact of remedial classes on the performance of Grade 7 Learners in Mathematics using Project TAPPIK (the abbreviation in the national language – Tanging Aksyon sa Pagbaa, Pagsulat, at Pagbilang para langat ang Karunungan). Specifically, the researchers seek to answer the following:

1. How does the profile of Grade 7 Low-Numerate learners in terms of (a) gender, (b) age and (c) family status affect their numeracy performance?
2. What are the changes in the attitude of Grade 7 Low-Numerate learners toward learning Mathematics during their remedial classes?
3. What are the interventions/teaching strategies that help Grade 7 Low-Numerate learners improve their numeracy?

The research wants to determine the impact of remedial classes on the performance of Grade 7 Learners in Mathematics using the Project TAPPIK. The remedial classes for the Grade 7 Low-Numerates will happen every Friday, the time will start at 3:00-4:00 in the afternoon. The intervention and strategy was implemented between May to June, 2023. The teachers prepared teacher-made intervention materials, math games, flashcards, and a math problem bank.

METHODOLOGY

A. Participants and/or other Sources of Data and Information

The participants of the study will involve the seventy-two (72) Grade 7 Low- Numerate learners identified by taking the NIT2L Pre-test and Post-test assessment tool currently enrolled for the school year 2022-2023.

B. Data Gathering Methods

Research Design. The descriptive method will be used in this study. The researchers preferred descriptive design method because it is concerned with answering questions such as “what” and “how”. (Grand Canyon University, n.d.). This study will determine the impact of remedial classes on the performance of Grade 7 learners in mathematics.

Research Instruments. The research instrument consists of three parts. Part I is to administer pre-test and post-test of the NIT2L assessment tool to the Grade 7 learners to identify the Low-Numerates. Parental consent was secured from the identified learners. Part II of the research instrument was the conduct of orientation to the learners and parents regarding the remedial classes on the numeracy program.

Part III of the research instrument is during the remedial classes, the teacher distributed the teacher-made learning materials to assess the Grade 7 Low-Numerates understanding and comprehension of (1) four fundamental operations on whole numbers, fractions, decimals, and integers; (2) translating algebraic expressions into a mathematical sentence; (3) solving problems involving basic geometry and polygons. The attendance of the participants will be monitored for every remedial class and their performance.

Data Gathering Procedure. In conducting research, it will be guided by the following procedure:

Securing permissions from the DepEd officials. Permission will be asked from the Public Schools District Supervisor and the school principal to gather relevant data.

Validation of the instrument. The head teacher/coordinator in Mathematics will evaluate the teacher-made test and learning materials.

Conducting orientation. This is to highlight the benefits of this research/program to the learners, parents, teachers, and schools' PPAs.

Administering the NIT2L Pre-Test and Post-Test. The result will be used as the baseline in determining if there is a positive outcome from the intervention.

Conducting the intervention. Remedial classes will be done from 3:00-4:00 in the afternoon on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The researcher will monitor if the remedial classes is done appropriately.

Checking, recording, and tabulating. Scores will be tabulated.

C. Data Analysis Plan

The researchers will apply the weighted mean average (WMA), standard deviation (SD), and an MPS to know whether there is a significant difference between the mean scores of the pre-test and post-test.

D. Statistical Treatment of Data

ARITHMETIC MEAN. This was used in determining the changes in the attitude of Grade 7 Low-Numerate learners toward learning mathematics during remedial classes.

The formula was: $\bar{X} = \frac{\sum fx}{N}$ where:

$\sum fx$ – the sum of the product of frequency and values N – total number of respondents.

MEAN, MPS, and SD. This was used to determine the best practices in the interventions / teaching strategies that give impact the Grade 7 Low-Numerate learners in improving their numeracy performance. The formula was:

$$\text{Mean } (\bar{x}) = \frac{\text{Total Score of Learners}}{\text{Total Number of Takers}}$$

$$\text{SD} = \sqrt{\frac{\sum |x - \bar{x}|^2}{n}}$$

$$\text{MPS} = \frac{\text{Computed Mean}(\bar{x})}{\text{Total Number of Test Items}} \times 100$$

RESULTS

Project TAPPPIK was a collaboration between the Filipino, English, and Mathematics teams, to develop a well-rounded and equipped learner who is capable of enriching not only his prior knowledge but also his learning progress in reading, writing, and numeracy skills, and upgrading reading comprehension in producing a well- balanced competency to rationalize what impact education has to his life.

As the starting point of this action research, the Grade 7 Mathematics teachers conduct pre-test and post-test Level 2 of the Numeracy Inventory Tool for Laguna Learners (NIT2L). The result was presented below.

Table 1

Pre-test and post-test results in nit2l level 2 for grade 7

Level 2 Result	Non-Numerate (0-10)	Low Numerate (11-20)	Numerate (21-29)	Highly Numerate (30-35)	Advance Numerate (36-40)	TOTAL
Pre-Test	133	72	32	3	0	240
Post-Test	76	92	64	8	0	240

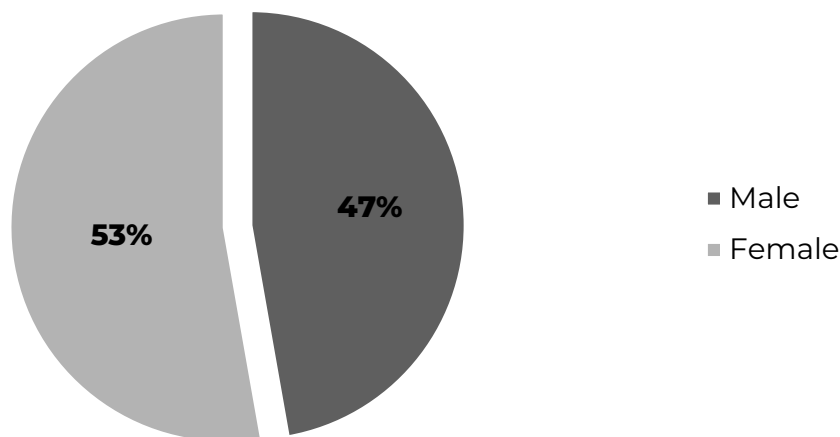
Table 1 presents the initial data for our Grade 7 learners regarding the numeracy level in pre-test and post-test. It reveals that seventy-six (76) learners were non-numerate.

THE PROFILE OF GRADE 7 LOW-NUMERATE LEARNERS

GENDER. The Figure 1 shows the distribution of respondents on their gender. The male respondents were **thirty-eight (38) or 52.78%** and female respondents were **thirty-four (34) or 47.22%**. Most More of the participants were male than female.

Figure 1

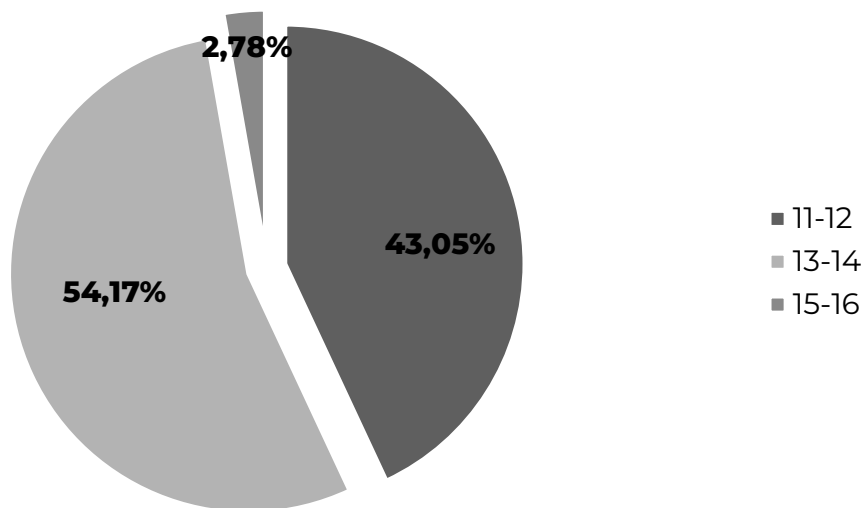
Distribution of Respondents According to Gender



AGE. Based on Figure 2, shows the distribution of respondents according to age out of seventy-two (72) Grade 7 learners thirty-nine (39), or 54.17% were 13-14 years old, thirty-one (31) or 43.05% were to 11-12 years old, and two (2) or 2.78% were 15-16 years old. Most of the Grade 7 participants **were 13-14 years old.**

Figure 2

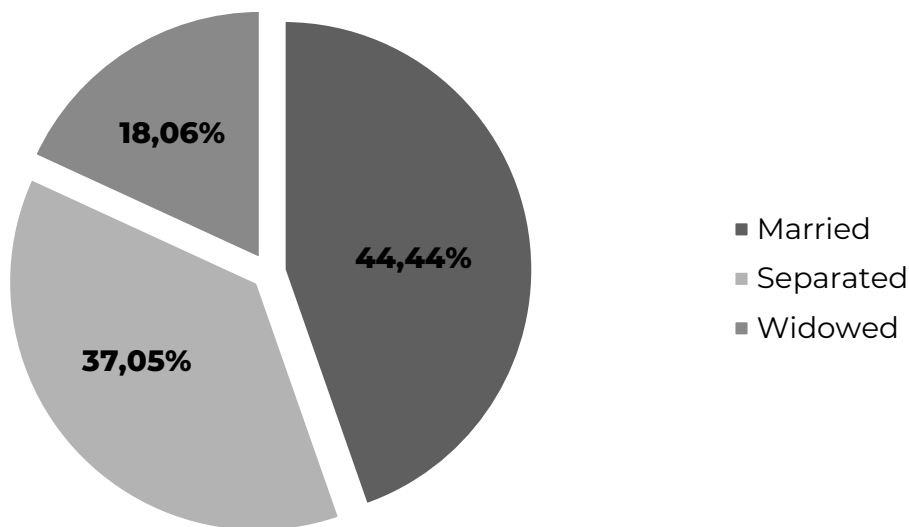
Distribution of Respondents According to Age



FAMILY STATUS. Based on Figure 3, it reveals the distribution of respondents according to their family status out of seventy-two (72) of them, thirty-two (32) or 44.44% were married, twenty-seven (27) or 37.50% were separated, and thirteen (13) or 18.06% were widowed. Most of the Grade 7 respondents were **married** their parents as family status.

Figure 3

Distribution of Respondents According to Family Status



The gender, age, and family status of learners is used to understand the impact of the remedial classes on attendance, participation, and the learners' attitudes towards the mathematics lessons and activities.

THE CHANGES IN THE ATTITUDE OF GRADE 7 LOW-NUMERATE LEARNERS TOWARD LEARNING MATHEMATICS DURING THEIR REMEDIAL CLASSES

This study confirms that numeracy activities have effects not only on mathematics achievement but also affects confidence and interests considering gender, age, and family status as conditions.

Although the effects of numeracy activities on mathematics achievement have been widely researched (DeFlorio & Beliakoff, 2014), their effects on mathematics affects have received little attention in past research. Numeracy activities are meaningful for children not only because they are playful but also because they are educational. Mathematics curricula and mathematics teaching emphasize both cognitive and affective outcomes, see table 2.

Table 2

The changes in the attitude of grade 7 low-numerate learners toward learning mathematics during their remedial classes

STATEMENTS	MEAN	VERBAL INTERPRETATIONS
LEARNERS ATTITUDE		
A. ENJOYMENT		
1. I enjoy solving Math problems whenever I see them.	4.58	ALWAYS
2. I feel happy when dealing with Mathematics.	3.88	MOST OF THE TIME
3. I enjoy exploring Math in my free time.	3.96	MOST OF THE TIME
4. I like to think critically and solve mathematical problems.	3.76	MOST OF THE TIME
5. I feel confident about trying different ways when solving Math problems.	3.68	MOST OF THE TIME
6. I think Math topics/lessons are very enjoyable and fun.	3.78	MOST OF THE TIME
AREA MEAN	3.94	MOST OF THE TIME
B. FEAR, ANXIETY, AND DISTRESS		
1. I think Math is confusing.	3.48	MOST OF THE TIME
2. I think Math is boring.	2.4	SOMETIMES
3. I only study Math to pass the subject.	3.24	ABOUT HALF OF THE TIME
4. Math is the subject I fear the most.	2.76	ABOUT HALF OF THE TIME
5. I am annoyed by the fact that Math is a course consisting of symbols and formulas.	3.16	ABOUT HALF OF THE TIME
6. I got tired of working with numbers.	3.1	ABOUT HALF OF THE TIME
AREA MEAN	3.023333	ABOUT HALF OF THE TIME
THE USE OF MATHEMATICS IN EVERYDAY LIFE		
1. I believe that the knowledge I get in Math class will be useful in life.	4.3	ALWAYS

2.	I think I can make sense of what we do in Math.	3.98	MOST OF THE TIME
3.	I believe Math will be useful for my future work.	4.1	MOST OF THE TIME
4.	I think learning to solve Math problems is useful.	3.94	MOST OF THE TIME
AREA MEAN		4.08	MOST OF THE TIME
PERCEIVED MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT			
1.	My friends think that I am excellent in Math.	3.68	MOST OF THE TIME
2.	I see myself as a successful student in Math.	4.22	ALWAYS
3.	I am not a model student in Math.	3.42	MOST OF THE TIME
4.	I develop confidence in solving mathematical problems.	3.52	MOST OF THE TIME
AREA MEAN		3.71	MOST OF THE TIME

Table 2 shows the changes in the attitude of Grade 7 Low-Numerate learners toward learning mathematics during their remedial classes. It shows that the **learners' attitude**, the (a) enjoyment it seems that the respondents have ALWAYS or 4.58 mean in enjoying solving Math problems whenever they see them.

The others have MOST OF THE TIME in terms of they feel happy when dealing with mathematics (3.88), they enjoy exploring Math in their free time (3.96), they like to think critically and solve mathematical problems (3.76), they feel confident about trying different ways when solving Math problems (3.68), and they think Math topic/lessons are very enjoyable and fun (3.78).

Also, (b) the fear, anxiety, and distress reveal that ABOUT HALF OF THE TIME with an area mean of 3.023 that MOST OF THE TIME they think Math is confusing has a mean of 3.48 and SOMETIMES they think Math is boring with a mean of 2.40.

The **use of mathematics in everyday life**, Table 1 reveals the perception of our Grade 7 low numerates they ALWAYS believe that the knowledge they get in Math class will be useful in life with a mean of 4.30, while the others were MOST OF THE TIME such as they think they can make sense of what they do in Math (3.98), they believe Math will be useful for their future work (4.10), and they think learning to solve Math problems was useful (3.10).

The **perceived mathematics achievement**, data shows (see Table 1) that they ALWAYS see themselves as a successful student in Math has a mean of 4.22, while the others were MOST OF THE TIME such as their friends think that they are excellent in Math (3.68), they are not a model student in Math (3.42), and they develop confidence in solving mathematical problems (3.52).

THE INTERVENTIONS/TEACHING STRATEGIES THAT GIVE IMPACT THE GRADE 7 LOW- NUMERATE LEARNERS IN IMPROVING THEIR NUMERACY PERFORMANCE

An individual's ability to understand and use numbers, such as data and risk information, to make health and healthcare decisions often depends on and can be greatly supported

by the way numbers are presented. The challenge is to know what numerical information to present (if any) and how to present it so people can find, understand, evaluate, communicate, and use that information to make an informed.

The study provides a basis for the development of an enhancement program by introducing an assessment method essential in promoting literacy and numeracy among learners at the secondary level, particularly in Grade 7. Also, it explored how numeracy and literacy work together in developing comprehension among learners toward enhanced academic performance, see table 3.

Table 3

The interventions/teaching strategies that give impact the grade 7 low-numerate learners in improving their numeracy performance

INTERVENTIONS	TOPICS/LESSONS	MEAN	MPS	SD
Dicey Equations	Whole Numbers	2.69	45.80	1.57
Convert the Message	Fractions and Decimals	3.71	74.20	1.42
Exponential Rolls	Exponents and Radicals	3.51	70.20	1.18

Table 3, shows that the interventions/teaching strategies **significantly improved their scores**. It shows that teaching and learning, assessment serves as a bridge. The Mean, MPS, and SD are used to analyze student responses to individual responses on the interventions/teaching strategies made by teachers. It is an important tool to uphold test effectiveness and fairness.

The best practice for using the intervention to improve the numeracy of learners in Mathematics 7 to 10 in LBNHS-Poblacion was the **Convert the Message** the topic involve was fractions and decimals it has a mean of 3.71 with a mean percentage score was 74.20 and standard deviation of 1.42. It indicates the ratio between the number of correct questions or the percentage of correctly answered in the activity was greater than the incorrect responses.

The pre-test and post-test achievement scores of the Grade 7 students from the back to basic numeracy skills, see table 4.

Table 4

Summary of mean and standard deviation

BACK-TO-BASIC TOPICS (15-item test)	PRE-TEST		POST-TEST	
	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION	MEAN	STANDARD DEVIATION
Whole Numbers	12.37	2.86	13.72	3.00
Fractions and Decimals	11.28	1.79	12.48	3.68
Exponents and Radicals	12.42	3.04	15.37	2.77

The table showed the mean and Standard Deviation of the achievement scores in remedial classes in back-to-basic lessons. The data revealed that the mean of the three (3) topics were almost identical.

This implies that the students in back-to- basics were comparable in terms of their achievement scores which indicates that these groups possess prior knowledge of back-to-basic topics /lessons. With this result, we can infer that the students in the remedial class had knowledge of the back-to- basic topics/lessons compared to the pre-test result.

DISCUSSION

The project problem was partly discussed among researchers (Specht, 2022; Gunerathne & Marikar, 2023). The Math teaching problem was partly discussed among researchers too (Maistriuk & Ponomarova, 2022; Olefirenko et al., 2019; Olefirenko et al., 2020).

The results, give us to conduct this action research and implemented remedial classes every Friday (3:00-4:00 PM), using various teacher-made worksheets, activity sheets, and game-based learning. Also, strengthened the DepEd Basic Education Report (BER) 2023 delivered by our Vice President and Secretary of Education Sara Z. Duterte, it aims to revitalize its Reading, Science and Technology, and Mathematics programs as part of the "MATATAG: Bansang Makabata, Batang Makabansa".

The researchers determined the gender, age, and family status of Grade 7 learners because according to Anders, et. al (2012) early numeracy activities may be more than simply serious mathematics games played between parents and children. It may contribute to multiple outcomes affecting children later in life. Parental and children's characteristics may also play roles in early numeracy activities, which in turn may affect children's achievement.

Based on the research results and discussions presented, the following findings were drawn:

1. Most of the Grade 7 learners were 12-13 years old, the male was the dominant gender, and most of their parents were married as family status. The gender, age, and family status of learners emphasizes the impact of the remedial classes in attending, participating, learners' insights towards the mathematics lessons and activities.
2. The changes in the attitude of Grade 7 Low-Numerate learners toward learning mathematics during their remedial classes it shows that the learners' attitude the (a) enjoyment it seems that the respondents have ALWAYS or 4.58 mean in enjoying solving Math problems whenever they see them, (b) the fear, anxiety, and distress reveal that ABOUT HALF OF THE TIME with an area mean of 3.023 that MOST OF THE TIME they think Math is confusing.

The **use of mathematics in everyday life** they ALWAYS believe that the knowledge they get in Math class will be useful in life with a mean of 4.30. The **perceived mathematics achievement**, they ALWAYS see themselves as a successful student in Math has a mean of 4.22.

The **use of mathematics in everyday life** they ALWAYS believe that the knowledge they get in Math class will be useful in life with a mean of 4.30. The **perceived mathematics achievement**, they ALWAYS see themselves as a successful student in Math has a mean of 4.22.

3. The interventions/teaching strategies that give impact the Grade 7 Low- Numerate learners in improving their numeracy performance **significantly improved their scores**.

This implies that the students in back-to-basics were comparable in terms of their achievement scores which indicates that these groups possess prior knowledge of back-to-basic topics /lessons.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusion was based on the findings presented:

1. The Grade 7 participants were male aged 12-13 years old. It is evident that the learners need to improve their skills on numeracy and literacy.
2. The activities in remedial classes were enjoyable, but they think confusing in their answers, they have prior knowledge of back-to-basic topics/lessons, and someday they become successful students in Mathematics after the project was implemented.
3. The Grade 7 learners improved their numeracy performance and significantly improved their scores.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:**ВПЛИВ КОРЕКЦІЙНИХ ЗАНЯТЬ НА УСПІШНІСТЬ УЧНІВ 7 КЛАСУ З МАТЕМАТИКИ У ПРОЕКТІ TARRPIK**

Мета. Дослідження було розроблено, щоб визначити вплив корекційних занять на успішність учнів 7 класу з математики за допомогою проекту TARRPIK (аббревіатура національною мовою – *Tanging Aksyon sa Pagbasa, Pagsulat, at Pagbilang para langat ang Karunungan*) на Філіппінах.

Методологія. У цьому дослідженні використовувалася змішана методологія дослідження, яка поєднала якісні та кількісні методи дослідження. Учасниками дослідження стали сімдесять два (72) учня 7-го класу з низьким рівнем навичок лічби, визначені за допомогою інструменту до та після тестового оцінювання за методикою NIT2L (*Instrument Numeracy Intervention for Laguna Learners*), які навчалися у 2022-2023 навчальному році. Дослідницький інструмент складався з трьох частин. Частина I передбачала проведення до та після тестового оцінювання за методикою NIT2L для учнів 7 класу щодо виявлення учнів з низькими балами. Згода батьків була отримана. Частиною II інструменту дослідження було проведення орієнтації учнів і батьків на корекційні заняття за програмою з лічби. Частина III інструменту дослідження – під час допоміжних занять, учитель розповсюджував розроблені ним навчальні матеріали, щоб оцінити розуміння та опанування учнями 7 класу, у яких були низькі бали: (1) навички чотирьох основних операцій з натуральними числами, дробами, десятковими та цілими числами; (2) переклад алгебраїчних виразів у математичне речення; (3) розв'язання задач, пов'язаних із базовою геометрією та багатокутниками.

Результати. Більшості учнів 7 класу було 12-13 років. Зміни у ставленні учнів 7 класу до вивчення математики під час їх корекційних занять показують, що учні отримали: (a) задоволення, –здається, що респонденти мають відповідь «завжди» – це 4,58 – середня оцінка задоволення від вирішення математичних задач щоразу, коли вони бачать їх; (b) страх, занепокоєння та тиск виявляють учні, це «близько половини часу», що відповідає середньому значенню 3,023; «більшість часу» відповідають учні – вони думають, що математика заплутана. При

використанні математики в повсякденному житті учні «завжди» вважають, що знання, які вони отримують на уроці математики, будуть корисними в житті – це середній бал 4,30. Сприймавши досягнення в математиці, учні «завжди» бачать себе успішними учнями з математики, маючи середній бал 4,22.

Висновки. Стратегії втручання і додаткового навчання, які вплинули на учнів 7 класу з низьким рівнем балів, покращили їхні результати в обчисленні, значно покращили їхні бали.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: ставлення, грамотність, низька кількість, математика, числення, учні.

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THE IDEAS OF BLOOM'S TAXONOMY IN A FIFTEENTH-CENTURY TREATISE IN SRI LANKA

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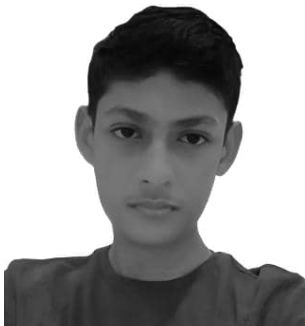
Faiz Marikar¹, & Ahamed Zayan²



¹ Ph.D., Director, Staff Development Centre at General Sir John Kotelawala Defence University, Ratmalana, Sri Lanka.


✉ E-Mail: faiz@kdu.ac.lk

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4579-7263>



² Student at Wesley College, Borella, Sri Lanka.

✉ E-Mail: WC16557@wesleycollege.lk

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0005-6467-528X>

ABSTRACT

Purpose. The purpose of this article is to study the relationship between Bloom's Taxonomy and Kawyasekara. According to some, the first instance of Bloom's Taxonomy was recorded by Benjamin Bloom in 1956, while Kawyasekara was written by Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera in 1449.

Methodology. Modern concepts of three hierarchical models, which differ from other types of educational concepts, did not develop until the fifteenth century, according to the critics. In this paper, it is shown how the concept we now refer to as Bloom's Taxonomy was first presented in a similar manner in a text from the Kotte Era in Sri Lanka, written in the fifteenth century by Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera.

Results. This manuscript demonstrates that Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera deserves praise for distinguishing educational notions from other kinds of educational conceptions. Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera categories, which were much more recently discovered, are given special consideration.

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Conclusions. *This document considering contemporary scientific findings and pedagogy exposes instructional ideas that have been around for centuries. These findings' theoretical are also examined.*

KEYWORDS: *Bloom's Taxonomy, Kawyasekara, Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula, Sri Lanka.*

INTRODUCTION

The desire to comprehend behavior and education may be as old as the earliest written records created by man. As a result, it should not be surprising to discover descriptions of educational concepts in ancient works (Demirel and Yildiran, 2013). Since social context has a significant influence on how people perceive mental development, teaching likely evolved differently because of the educational situation in the past (Scharfe, 2018). Information on earlier cultures can be found in historical manuscripts. Ancient texts come in a variety of forms, including paper, palm leaf, stone, and metal carvings. Lack of effective conservation techniques is the reason for the abundance of well-preserved manuscripts (Sahoo, 2016).

Before the invention of paper, palm leaf manuscripts were regarded as one of the fundamental sources of written information. The first publication on educational concepts, or pedagogy, dates to the year 1872 (Figure 1), discusses palm tree writing, which dates to 1449 and is therefore over 570 years old. The authors will demonstrate that Bloom's first volume of the taxonomy of educational objectives, a masterpiece of educational theory published in 1956, was influenced by Kawyasekaraya.

Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera (1408–1491)

The Buddhist monk and illustrious scholar Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera flourished in Sri Lanka in the fifteenth century. A polyglot, he was given the moniker "Shad Bhasha Parameshwara" for his proficiency in six eastern languages that were widely spoken in Sri Lanka and on the Indian subcontinent. Sangharaja Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera was a renowned author, accomplished astrologer, and skilled ayurvedic doctor (Gamlath, 2014).

There are numerous folktales about Sri Rahula Thera's life, from his youth through his passing. Despite being a young genius, he had a mischievous personality and a thirst for adventure. One well-known tale claims that he drank a full bottle of "Saraswathi oil," a therapeutic oil that improves memory, despite the fact that only a drop should be used. It is thought that Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera's remarkable memory throughout his life was the result of the effects of this therapeutic oil. According to local tradition and folklore, Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera was also an exorcist who used mantras to command demons to perform manual labor (Gamlath, 2014).

In the Sri Lankan district of Kegalle, in Dematana, a village close to Dedigama, Sri Rahula Thera was born in 1408. Jayaba was his real name. Although his parents are unknown, some accounts claim that his mother was the older sister of Keerawelle Kumari, the queen who served as King Parakkramabahu VI of Kotte's principal consort. If this is correct, Prince Wickramabahu was his father and Princess Seelawathi was his mother. Prince Jayaba was raised by King Parakkramabahu VI and his wife after his mother passed away while he was a little child. Uthurumula Rahula Thera and Wilgammula Thera, who were also related to Prince Jayaba, served as his primary teachers. Prince

Jayaba was consecrated as a novice Buddhist monk and given the monastic name Wachissara Rahula Thera (Gamlath, 2014).

Young Rahula Thera relocated to the Wijayabha pirivena of Thotagamuwa for his further education after receiving his ordination as a monk. The best-known and best-liked educational institution during the Kotte era was Vijayaba Pirivena, located at Thotagamuwa, Hikkaduwa, in the Galle District of Sri Lanka. The Polonnaruwa monarch King Vijayabahu I founded this illustrious pirivena, which gave the nation numerous oriental academics. Young Rahula Thera quickly amassed a vast grasp of literature, eastern languages, and Buddhist teachings. He entertained his professors and the king by fluently reciting the entire Tripiaka by heart. Sri Rahula Thera spent the majority of his life at Vijayaba Pirivena, where he also produced some of his best-known literary works. As main prelate of Vijayaba, he later succeeded his grandfather's Uthurumua Rahula Thera and Galthurumula Thera. The title of Sangharaja, bestowed upon Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera by King Parakramabahu VI, was also a first for a Sri Lankan Bhikkhu (De Silva, 2017).

A key figure in Sri Lankan literature, Sri Rahula Thera produced a number of highly regarded Sinhala literary works. Some of his major compositions are Buddhagajjaya (1430), Uruthamala Sandesaya (1435), Paravi Sandeshaya (1445), Gira Sandeshaya, Salalihini Sandeshaya (1447), Kawyashekaraya (1449), Parakumba Siritha, Panchika Pradeepaya (1457), Buddhipasadiniya (1480), Sakaskada, and Mawula Sandesaya (Madhusanka, 2015).

Sri Lankan traditional poetry has a lengthy history. The earliest manuscripts that have survived were created under Parakrama Bahu I's rule (1153–1186). It is reported that he built 128 libraries across his empire. Prose treatises on religion, morals, medicine, and science were among the first Sinhalese writings written on olas, but there were many more poems than prose works (Madhusanka, 2015).

Between the middle of the fifteenth century and the middle of the nineteenth century, there was a difficult time characterized by conflicts between groups and invasions from the West; this was an unfavorable time for the development of poetry. Some historians and critics believe that the uncorrupt body of Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera, which was transported by the Portuguese from the isolated town of Ambana in Southern Sri Lanka, is what is maintained in the Basilica of Bom Jesus in Goa, India (Nissanka, 2017).

A fifteen-canto lyrical composition, Kawyasekara is believed to have been written after the author was invited to do so by Ulakudaya, a queen in ancient Sri Lanka. The goal of Venerable Totagamuve Sri Rahula Thera's visit was to increase the queen's understanding of Buddhism. The work honors the Buddha's wisdom and is based on a story from the Jataka book, a literary work that describes the Buddha's former incarnations. The Sattubhatta Jataka story paints a detailed picture of how the Buddha mesmerized his family and well-wishers with his astonishing insight. The Jataka tales' key moments are described by Venerable Rahula Thera in clear Sinhala, using a variety of similes and metaphors.

Benjamin Bloom

The Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: The Classification of Educational Goals, which Benjamin Bloom published in 1956, classified learning objectives based on a framework

that has come to be known as Bloom's Taxonomy (Bloom and Krathwohl, 2020). It was one of the earliest attempts to objectively categorize cognitive functioning levels and it brought structure to gifted students' otherwise fluid thought processes. According to the 1981 study "Significant Writings That Have Influenced the Curriculum," by Harold G. Shane and the National Society for the Study of Education, Bloom's Taxonomy continues to be a cornerstone of the academic profession. Also credited to him is Bloom's 2 Sigma Problem (Adams, 2015).

Benjamin Bloom studied students' academic performance. Bloom and his colleagues observed aspects both inside and outside of the school environment that can affect how children learn through performing a range of investigations (Sivaraman and Krishna, 2015). The lack of variety in instruction is one example. Bloom postulated that children could learn more effectively if teachers tailored their lesson plans to the unique needs of each student. As a result, the Bloom's Mastery Learning process was developed (Bhargav et al., 2016). Teachers divide up concepts and skills into lessons that last one to two weeks as a result of this procedure. The student is given an assessment at the conclusion of the unit that offers helpful criticism on what the student has learned. Corrective assignments based on the material they had problems understanding is given to students who did not understand some of the unit's key ideas. After that, students take a second evaluation that concentrates solely on the knowledge and abilities they were told to exercise. This guarantees that each student receives tailored education at the rate the child requires to learn effectively. It is advised that students who demonstrate mastery of the subject matter get enrichment exercises to extend their learning. These activities are self-selected by the student and may come in the form of academic games, reports, special projects, etc. (Marzano, 2001).

The original Bloom's cognitive taxonomy consisted of six distinct domain levels: knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. The knowledge and cognitive processes were the fundamental themes of each Bloom domain. The affective domain, which is concerned with students' interests, attitudes, and feelings, was later the focus of the American educational psychologist David Krathwohl and several of his colleagues (Bloom and Krathwohl, 2020). A different American educational psychologist created the psychomotor domains, which cover a wide range of motor skills. The emphasis on the cognitive in Bloom's work was a major selling point. Even though in his work he frequently explored the entire range of "entry" traits (cognitive and affective) that students demonstrate when they first start their schooling, Bloom came to be closely linked with the cognitive dimension.

Explanation of Sections 48–53 in the Kawyasekaraya

Extracts from sections 48–53 in the Kawyasekara were taken from a publication done in the year 1872 (Figure 1) by Mohottiwatte Gunanda himi, though the book was initially published by Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera in 1449. On the left the extracts are written in the Sinhala language and on the right is a direct translation.

The **purpose** of this article is to study the relationship between Bloom's Taxonomy and Kawyasekara.

METHODOLOGY

The study used a general scientific method that facilitated the analysis, comparison, and systematization of archival materials and scientific literature; the historical and pedagogical method provides information on the development of the study’s structure.

The study provides a definition of traditions and innovations in the directions and content of adult pedagogical education during a certain period; terminological analysis, which provides the definition of basic concepts in accordance with the subject of the research; and prognostics, which make it possible to outline the prospects for using, at the present stage, the experience of the “Knowledge” Society of Sri Lanka in the organization of adult education.

Figure 1

Kawayasekeraya publication (A: palm tree, and B: printed page).



RESULTS

Knowledge in section 48

48		
භූරූසිත නොවිඳ	වා	Without hurting teachers mind
වේලාව නොවරද	වා	Works on time
බැභිපෙම් උපද	වා	Embed love with kindness
අකුරුඋගනී කුමරු නොඳ වා		Learn from a king with solid basics

Section 48 explains respectful and considerate behavior: treat teachers with respect and consideration, appreciating their knowledge and work. Avoid saying or doing anything that can offend them or make them feel insecure. Time management: stress the value of working quickly and finishing projects on time. To ensure timely completion of work, encourage teachers to prioritize activities, create attainable goals, and manage their time well.

Create a culture of love and kindness within the school community to cultivate a caring atmosphere. Encourage educators to show compassion, empathy, and understanding for their students and coworkers. Encourage generosity and appreciation. Building on a

solid foundation: encourage teachers to improve their instructional techniques by taking advice from more seasoned teachers who have a firm grasp of the fundamentals. Stress the value of learning the **fundamentals of knowledge** before examining more sophisticated methods or approaches.

By adhering to these values, we may support teachers without endangering them, encourage a punctual and effective work ethic, build a climate of love and kindness, and promote ongoing education from knowledgeable mentors with a solid background in their profession. All three domains – **Knowledge, Skill, and Attitude** – were explicated in this section.

Comprehension in section 49

49		
කෙලෙහි දුණ ද	න්නා	A person with solid gratitude
කීර්දේ දුහුව ග	න්නා	Who learn quickly what teacher taught
නුවනැතිව දු	න්නා	A person with well sound education
කුමරු ලන්දේ දුරුවපෙන්නා		Reflect what they learned from the teacher

In this description, a person is shown to have a deep sense of gratitude for their professors and to cherish the teachings they have taught them. This person is portrayed as being able to pick up new information quickly and enthusiastically. The person is also described as having a well-rounded education, implying that they have a thorough understanding of several different courses or fields of study. They have had a wide variety of educational opportunities and have built a strong foundation of abilities and knowledge.

Furthermore, the person reflects upon what they have learned from their teachers. They take time to contemplate and internalize the lessons, **understanding their significance and relevance** in their own life. This reflective process allows them to integrate the knowledge into their own thinking and behavior.

The person recognizes and values the influence their professors have had on their academic and personal development. They cherish the advice and assistance their professors gave them, and they show their appreciation for them by using the knowledge and skills they have learned in productive ways. The description highlights this person’s commitment to lifelong learning and their profound respect for the role that teachers play in their intellectual development. It also highlights their thankfulness, quick learning capacity, strong education, and reflective character.

Application in section 50

50		
කාමීසි සිතින් හි	හි	Mindfulness with subject knowledge
වැඩකැමතිව වෙනස්නැ	හි	Saturated with work positivity
දුරු සිතලෙස පැව	හි	Behavioral change as a lecturer
කුමරු සම්පත ගෙවාදැනගති		Graduation on time.

Important elements of preserving job positivity, encouraging behavioral change in lecturers, and assuring on-time graduation are highlighted. Combining mindfulness with topic knowledge requires being totally focused and present when performing teaching or research work. It involves approaching the topic with curiosity, engaging in self-reflection, and keeping up with current research and debates.

Saturated in work positivity: it's important to keep a positive outlook on work for both productivity and well-being. This entails finding meaning and purpose in your career, practicing appreciation, surrounding yourself with inspiring people, and giving self-care activities first priority. Change in behavior as a lecturer: as a lecturer, you must foster a supportive learning atmosphere, encourage active learning, offer helpful feedback, and set a good example for your students if you want them to modify their behavior. **It involves encouraging pupils to think critically and empathically while creating a safe space for them to express themselves and what they have learned by application.**

Graduation on time: providing support services, monitoring progress, and clearly communicating program requirements to students will help them graduate on time. Academic advising will also assist with course preparation. Students can finish their degrees successfully and on schedule if faculty members support them in using school resources and dealing with any academic or personal challenges. Teachers may help students succeed academically and personally by introducing mindfulness practices, upholding a positive outlook, encouraging behavioral change, and providing support. This will ultimately help students graduate on time.

Analysis in section 51

පැහැයෙන් සුවඳිනු	ස	Saturated with the smell of the color
මෝරණ සපුකැනුම ව	ස	Matured flower which smell all over
උච්ච්ඤාණ නැතිනු	ස	features as iconic figure
වැඩිහිටි මහසන්තෝෂීන් පරසිදු		Becomes a legend in his field.

A vibrant canvas emerges in the world of art, where the aroma of color dances in scented spaces. An iconic figure with an unmatched presence, its aroma fills the air like that of a ripe flower. With each stroke, he establishes himself as an industry legend and an artist whose skill leaves us speechless and overcome. His works go beyond the commonplace and everyday, elevating the canvas to unimaginable worlds.

His creations are on display all over the world, a monument to his talent and the pure joy of being an artist. His vision and talent leave an enduring impression, and his name reverberates through art galleries, museums, and people's emotions. He creates a symphony through the use of brush and palette, weaving together unseen tales, feelings, and fantasies. **With each brushstroke and line, he catches the essence of life, captivating and entrancing us with his work.**

As fans and detractors congregate, filled with wonder and sadness, the aroma of his ability remains in the air. Because legends are created, not born. The phrase conjures up the idea of an artist whose works are drenched in vivid hues and perfumed with enticing scents. As they develop into a mature flower-like artist, they become an iconic figure in

their industry, making an impression on both fans and detractors. They transcend borders and become legends in the field of art thanks to their extraordinary talent and mastery.

Synthesis in section 52

52		
සිව්වේ විදුදස	ව	Knowledge skills attitudes and mindset
සව් සිව්කලා සිව්සැ	ව	Acquired all the educational concepts
සන් ආගම ඇම	ව	As well as seven religious concepts
ඉතා නිපුණය කුමරු නිම	ව	Skillfully person like a king who produced from the process

The cornerstones of personal development and growth are knowledge, skills, attitudes, and mindset. People develop a broad understanding of many areas and disciplines through the acquisition of educational concepts. They are given the intellectual tools necessary to successfully traverse the world’s complexity thanks to this knowledge. Religious concepts, in addition to educational ones, are important in forming a person’s viewpoint and values. These ideas can provide people a moral compass and help them live lives with meaning if they understand and embrace the ideas.

But knowledge on its own is insufficient. People can apply their knowledge in real-world circumstances more successfully by developing their talents. Through repetition, experience, and ongoing learning, skills are polished. **A skilled person may invent, innovate, and lead with competence just like a king who controls the industrial process as synthesis.** Beyond information and abilities, attitudes and mindset are essential elements of personal development. Positive attitudes that help people overcome obstacles and failures include perseverance, flexibility, and resilience. A growth mentality, on the other hand, encourages confidence in one’s capacity to learn, develop, and seize new possibilities.

Individuals have the potential to be potent agents of growth and change when all these factors come together. They have a comprehensive education, a grasp of religious ideas, refined skills, and an optimistic outlook. Such individuals have the ability to create, to inspire, and to have a significant impact on their own lives as well as on the lives of others, much like a monarch who has undergone a transformative process. Acquiring knowledge, honing abilities, forming good attitudes, and creating a growth mindset all contribute to personal development. Religion offers moral guidance and ideals while education provides a basis of knowledge and comprehension. Individuals can apply their information more successfully by developing their skills, and attitudes like tenacity and flexibility help people get through obstacles. A growth mindset encourages ongoing learning and development. Individuals are given the power to create, to inspire, and to have a significant impact on their lives and on the world when all these factors come together.

Evaluation in section 53

53		
පෙනෙල්ලෙන් ඇවු	එ	Lighten up the place with the knowledge
පහනෙව් වතුන් අලුත	එ	With the shining all the object
ගුරුණුදු නොමග ස	එ	Gained knowledge from the teachers what was taught
කුමරු සතදුන සසින්සුලකුම		Live the entire life as a king

Knowledge enlightenment makes the world a more pleasant place to live. It shines on everything like a ray of light, blazing the way to understanding. Valuable information is taught through the leadership of teachers and mentors, laying the groundwork for growth and learning. With this understanding, one can make wise and self-assured decisions in life. Every experience becomes a chance to put the knowledge gained to use and choose wisely. In this way, armed with the wisdom they have attained, a person can live their entire life as a monarch.

Similar to how a king rules over his realm, a person who has gained knowledge has the ability to control their own destiny. They have the capacity to make informed decisions, follow their passions, and advance society. They possess the capacity to motivate and guide, resulting in favorable change in their surroundings. Living like a king has nothing to do with having power or tangible money; it has everything to do with the way one thinks and lives. It involves accepting information, pursuing improvement constantly, and employing that knowledge to have a significant influence. With this outlook, one can shine brightly and make a lasting impression on the world.

The world is made lighter and brighter by information accumulation. Individuals acquire information through teachers and mentors, which equips them with crucial insights to make their way through life. ***They are better able to make wise decisions and contribute to society as a result of this knowledge, which gives them a sense of aristocratic living by evaluation.*** Using knowledge to lead, motivate, and effect positive change is what it means to be a “king” in this context. It is not about having a lot of money; rather, it is about embracing information, continuing to improve, and leaving a lasting impression on the world.

This clearly maps with Bloom’s taxonomy, one to one. Therefore, Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera wrote a masterpiece that we need to value.

DISCUSSION

In our opinion, public associations can serve as platforms for testing, and for implementing innovative methods and tools for organizing nonformal education. In particular, to promote the adaptation of education to the new realities of the fifteenth century, where nonformal education, as stated in the Memorandum of Continuing Education long before the Bloom’s Taxonomy by Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera.

In our opinion, the “Knowledge Society” is a positive example of the organization of nonformal education, namely in the implementation and development of the organization of pedagogical education of adults in the Kawyasekara.

At the same time, we share the opinion of Benjamin Bloom (1956) that the development of adult education in the mid-twentieth century was due to political and economic realities. However, in our opinion, the pedagogical education of adults, which was established in the fifteenth century by Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera, is evidence based proved it.

Limitations

There are numerous restrictions when doing a historical analysis of the idea of obsessions. For instance, because they were written in Pali, Sanskrit, and Sinhala, manuscripts of this type from the scholastic era are difficult to access. This made it

difficult for us to evaluate Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera's contributions in comparison to those of his contemporaries. When manuscripts were available, discussions on the idea of obsessions tended to be brief and dispersed, which could result in unintentional omissions.

CONCLUSION

The view of education in Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera's book, which dates back to the height of Buddhism, is surprisingly more akin to contemporary views of education than those of his contemporaries. The writings of Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera raise several interesting questions, one of which is how closely our modern conceptions of education resemble those of his generation in many respects. It's likely that it has taken close to a millennium for people to acknowledge and value the precocious talent of Thotagamuwe Sri Rahula Thera's work.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interests regarding the publication of this paper.

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:

ІДЕЇ ТАКСОНОМІЇ БЛУМА В ТРАКТАТІ 15 СТОЛІТТЯ НА ШРІ-ЛАНЦІ

Метою цієї статті є вивчення зв'язку між таксономією Блума та трактатом Кав'ясекарою. За деякими даними, перший екземпляр таксономії Блума був записаний Бенджаміном Блумом у 1956 році, трактат Кав'ясекара (1449) був написаний Тотагамуве Шрі Рахула Тера.

Методологія. На думку деяких дослідників, сучасні концепції трьох ієрархічних моделей, які відрізняють їх від інших типів освітніх концепцій, не розвивалися до 15 століття. У цій статті показано, як концепція, яку ми зараз називаємо таксономією Блума, була вперше представлена подібним чином у тексті трактату епохи Котте на Шрі-Ланці, написаному в 15 столітті Тотагамуве Шрі Рахула Тераю.

Результати. Відкриття цього рукопису демонструє, що Тотагамуве Шрі Рахула Тера заслуговує схвалення за розрізнення освітніх понять від інших видів освітніх концепцій. Категоріям Тотагамуве Шрі Рахула Тера, які були досліджені набагато пізніше, приділяємо особливу увагу.

Висновки. Читання трактату з огляду на сучасні наукові відкриття та педагогіку визначає академічні ідеї, які існували століттями. Також розглядаються теоретичні та практичні наслідки цих результатів.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: таксономія Блума, Кав'ясекара, Тотагамуве Шрі Рахула Тера, Шрі-Ланка.

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LEVEL CHARACTERISTICS OF FOREIGN LANGUAGE COMMUNICATIVE COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT OF STUDENTS FOR TECHNICAL SPECIALTIES

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Anastasiia Ptushka

Ph.D. in Philology, Associate Professor, Head of the Department of Foreign Languages, Kharkiv National Automobile and Highway University, Kharkiv, Ukraine.



✉ **E-Mail:** ptushkaanastasia@gmail.com

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3177-5370>

ABSTRACT

Purpose. *The article examines the question of the levels of foreign language communicative competence development of students for technical specialties. The characteristics of the corresponding levels are given. The tasks are to find out the essence of the concept «level of foreign language communicative competence»; to analyze classifications of foreign language proficiency levels; characterize the criteria for the levels of foreign language communicative competence development of students for technical specialties, based on the analysis.*

Methodology. *Research methods are the analysis and summarization of relevant scientific materials for the purpose of collecting and presenting results, as well as coming to the conclusions.*

Results. *The concept of the mastery level of a foreign language can be defined as a student's ability to formulate his foreign language statements in a grammatically correct and communicatively acceptable way to solve certain functional communication tasks, that implies the possession of a certain set of linguistic and sociocultural knowledge, skills. Many level systems are oriented (for practical purposes) to three main levels: elementary; medium (intermediate); advanced, they can be divided into sublevels depending on the purpose of level determining. As a result, six levels emerged, where each of the three main ones is divided into one more*

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advanced and one less advanced, compared to the most basic level of foreign language proficiency.

The system of levels of foreign language proficiency is closely related to the system of control, assessment and self-assessment of the level foreign language communicative competence development. Each type of foreign language communicative competence corresponds to its own level of learning, that differs in final target settings. The training level (planned result) is a projection of the goal on the content of training, it involves taking into account the training conditions.

Taking into account the characteristics of the component composition of foreign language communicative competence, the experience of developing new control models, it is possible to single out the parameters and criteria necessary for assessing the level of foreign language communicative competence development of students. Namely, the purpose of the final control is to establish the correspondence between the level of foreign language communicative competence and the requirements of the English language curriculum for students of technical specialties.

Conclusion. *Thus, when considering issues related to the control of foreign language knowledge, skills (definition of goals, content, exam type, evaluation criteria), one should take into account both international standards of the level of foreign language proficiency and modern national requirements, they are submitted in educational programs and foreign language textbooks. In other words, all components of foreign language communicative competence should be the object of control.*

In particular, the pan-European system of language proficiency levels can be adapted to the goals of professional education and can serve as a basis for various diagnostic models that ensure the technologicalization of the competence approach in the process of foreign language training under the conditions of non-language higher education.

KEYWORDS: *Multi-Level Model, Pan-European System, Language Proficiency Levels, Foreign Language Communicative Competence, Competence Approach, Levels of Foreign Language Proficiency.*

INTRODUCTION

In today's conditions, the system of training students of higher education institutions, in particular technical specialties, requires not only a rethinking and restructuring of the content and structure of the learning process, but also the need to effectively solve the problems of diagnosis and knowledge control of future specialists.

The use of competencies as the main structural element of building the state standard of higher education requires a comprehensive study of the process of developing learning outcomes, which must identified to develop a standard to measure the achievements of the educational process in a competency framework. The competence approach affects the formation of a new assessment culture, which involves the transition from knowledge assessment to competence assessment.

An analysis of higher education standards underscored the crucial need for graduates to possess foreign language communicative competence. Within our work, we define this competence as the individual's capacity and willingness to engage in both interpersonal and intercultural communication using a foreign language.

This goes beyond simply having linguistic, sociocultural knowledge, abilities, and skills. It encompasses the flexibility and appropriateness of adapting one's language behavior to different contexts and situations, as deemed relevant and appropriate. This model of foreign language communicative competence consists of linguistic, conversational and sociocultural competences. The listed competencies appear as components of foreign language communicative competence and create a system of a single whole.

The success of building foreign language communicative competence in technical students hinges on how well these key components are developed. The level of competence formation is a characteristic that changes over time. The assimilation of components occurs gradually. The introduction of degrees of levels of competency acquisition is necessary for ranking the depth of its formation.

The **purpose** is to investigate and describe the various proficiency levels of foreign language communication skills among students in technical fields.

METHODOLOGY

Research methods are the analysis and summarization of relevant scientific materials for the purpose of collecting and presenting results, as well as coming to the conclusions.

RESULTS

In the British methodical tradition, the level of English language proficiency is determined by how close a student is to a native speaker in their language behavior.

According to S. Hamidova, the problem of selecting communicative skills can be solved using the concept of «speech action». He proposes that the ability to perform the speech act of «finding out where something is» can be used as a gauge for foreign language proficiency (Hamidova et al., 2020).

But even if such language actions are mastered to the level of proficiency, it is impossible to solve the problem of selecting communicative skills, the problem of determining the content of the learning goal, since communication does not consist only of such language actions. Communication primarily arises from communicative tasks embedded within wider communicative activities, rather than isolated speech acts. These tasks constitute the essence of direct communication (Zhernovnykova et al., 2019; Zubkov, 2022; Shandruk & Arkushyna, 2021). Beyond acquiring knowledge, the real goal of learning a foreign language should be achieving a level of mastery that allows effective communication.

Within a specific methodological framework for classifying language proficiency levels, foreign language communicative competence should be viewed as a distinct level characterized by precise features of an individual's linguistic, conversational, and sociocultural behavior. This distinctness allows for clear differentiation from other levels

of language mastery, both as a tool for communication and cognition (Hosseini & Ghonsooly, 2017).

Some researchers define the pinnacle of foreign language proficiency as achieving a level where linguistic, extralinguistic, and sociolinguistic parameters closely resemble those of native speakers. Individuals at this level can:

1. Articulate their understanding of the world and engage in informative discourse.
2. Initiate and manage communication effectively, ensuring both fluency and accuracy.
3. Effortlessly process and retain language, possessing robust memory and anticipation skills across all linguistic levels.
4. Adapt their language and communication style to match their interlocutors and contexts.
5. Enact diverse social roles and build genuine social connections.
6. Engage in metacommunication, reflecting on and discussing the very nature of communication itself.
7. Leverage both verbal and nonverbal cues for enhanced comprehension and expression (William, 2017; Ishchuk & Mazurenok, 2022; Chykhantsova, 2019).

This interpretation of the highest level of foreign language proficiency differs from D Himes's perspective, which acknowledges inherent uncertainty in language acquisition and qualitative assessment. Himes argues that foreign language communicative competence develops within any method, but its effectiveness hinges on a nuanced understanding of its components and structure (Cheipesh, 2019; Palasiuk, 2014; Vasilieva, 2020).

A. Zubkov argued that effective communication task completion hinges on four key factors: individual willingness and readiness to actively express oneself in the foreign language; resourcefulness in utilizing the existing vocabulary and grammar structures; understanding of paralinguistic cues (e.g., tone, intonation) and their role in language use; awareness of kinesthetic aspects (e.g., body language, gestures) and their contribution to communication (Zubkov, 2022).

In her research on standardized language tests for business communication, S. Omelanchuk defines "level of communicative competence" as a measurable degree of proficiency that enables individuals to: solve practical communication tasks in a foreign language context; align their language skills and knowledge with the specific demands and situations of real-world business communication (Omelyanchuk, 2019).

Hosseini, H. and Ghonsooly, B. differentiate between «level» and «objective» within foreign language learning. They further identify two key characteristics associated with both «levels» and «tasks»:

- Capability: This refers to the abilities possessed by a student or language user, encompassing what they can potentially do;
- Performance: This focuses on the quality of execution, or how well they can perform a particular task (Hosseini & Ghonsooly, 2017).

Foreign language mastery revolves around a student's ability to construct grammatically accurate and communicatively appropriate statements. This ability enables them to solve specific functional tasks within communication, reflecting their grasp of diverse linguistic and sociocultural knowledge, skills, and abilities (Shandruk & Arkushyna, 2021; Chornobai, 2021).

Thus, there are also discrepancies in the selection and description of levels of foreign language communicative competence. As is obvious from the above definitions, the very concept of «level» in the studies of different authors carries a different semantic load, there is no generally accepted classification of levels of foreign language proficiency.

There has now been a transition from a 2-tiered model, which includes basic and advanced levels, to a multi-tiered model.

Within the advanced level of foreign language proficiency, two subcategories were established: advanced-superbasic (threshold), aligning with the requirements of the secondary comprehensive school program; actual-advanced (Vantage), the level students should achieve by the end of their studies with an in-depth focus on the foreign language.

In the scientific literature, six levels of foreign language communicative competence are distinguished:

- primary;
- average;
- advanced;
- high (above basic);
- professionally sufficient;
- higher (as native speakers).

Seeking to categorize foreign language proficiency, scholars from outside Europe developed a framework known as the Common European Framework (CEFR) under the auspices of the Council of Europe.

A group of international experts, working as part of the Council of Europe, established the Common European Framework (CEFR) as a system for classifying foreign language proficiency levels.

With the goal of establishing a standardized classification of foreign language abilities, the Council of Europe, in collaboration with international researchers, initiated the development of the Common European Framework (CEFR).

First of all, the problem is to determine the number of level categories. If a small number of level categories are used, the accuracy and validity of determining the level of foreign language proficiency will be sacrificed to reliability. A more flexible approach to the allocation of so-called conventional levels was needed.

Many level systems are focused (for practical purposes) on three main levels:

- elementary (elementary);
- medium (intermediate);

– advanced,

which can be divided into sub-levels depending on the purpose of determining the level.

This process yielded six distinct levels, with each of the three major categories further subdivided into one level that is more proficient and another that is less proficient compared to the foundational level of foreign language proficiency.

The project ultimately resulted in a six-level framework, where each of the three primary levels is further differentiated into one sub-level of higher proficiency and one sub-level of lower proficiency relative to the entry-level of foreign language competency.

This initiative culminated in the establishment of a six-level system, where each of the three central levels is further divided into one more advanced and one less advanced variant compared to the baseline level of foreign language proficiency (Council of Europe, 2011).

These include the following levels:

1. A1 – «Survival» (Breakthrough).
2. A2 – «Waystage».
3. B1 – «Threshold».
4. B2 – «Advanced Threshold» (Vantage).
5. C1 – «High» (Effective Proficiency).
6. C2 – «Perfect command of the language» (Mastery) (Council of Europe, 2011).

The established levels of foreign language proficiency closely align with the systems used for monitoring, evaluating, and self-evaluating the development of foreign language communicative competence. Notably, while language competence and even reading and listening skills can be assessed based on the percentage match between the task and the final grade, evaluating language and sociocultural competence often relies on a «formal, sample-based approach» (Menke & Paesani, 2019). Qualitative criteria are necessary. These can be scales consisting of a description of foreign language knowledge, skills and abilities within one or another level.

Different categories of foreign language communicative competence map to distinct learning levels, each culminating in specific target outcomes. The training level (desired outcome) translates the overall goal into the curriculum content, incorporating the specific training environment and conditions (Palasiuk, 2014).

Several key criteria can be used to evaluate the development of foreign language communicative competence:

- correctness and correctness of lexical-grammatical, intonation-syntactic and phonetic design of foreign language speech;
- acceptability and expediency of the language behavior strategies used;
- ability to communicative partnership;
- the communicative expediency of using linguistic means of broadcasting;
- acceptability of language means and language behavior in socio-cultural terms;
- presence of socio-cultural awareness of the country of the language.

The implementation of the pan-European system of levels of foreign language proficiency does not limit the possibilities of educational institutions to develop their system of levels of education. It should be noted that the development of objective criteria for assessing the level of foreign language proficiency will ensure the recognition of grades obtained by students in exams (Fandieieva, 2020).

In the real practice of teaching foreign languages, attention can be focused on a certain set of levels and categories depending on the specific goals and conditions of learning.

One of the ways to objectively assess the real level of foreign language proficiency is international standardized tests (exams), which aim to either confirm the declared level or have a diagnostic nature. Such exams of most of the largest British chambers: UCLES (Cambridge), ARELS (Oxford), Pitman Qualifications City and Guides of London Institute and others. All exams of this group are multi-level, that is, with a general format, they have a different degree of difficulty, allowing the candidate to test his strength depending on the level of language proficiency.

They involve testing abilities and skills in all four types of language activities: reading, writing, speaking and listening.

The results of this testing are recognized in various spheres: the business community, leading universities, government organizations, national educational structures. The Cambridge ESOL exams certificate is considered a «mark of quality» for an employer.

Cambridge international exams determine the level of foreign language communicative competence of candidates in everyday everyday and professional communication. In line with the communicative approach to foreign language learning, Cambridge ESOL primarily reflects the practical side of candidates' foreign language communicative competence.

When assessing foreign language knowledge, skills, and abilities, it's vital to consider both international standards for proficiency and current domestic requirements outlined in curricula and textbooks. All aspects of foreign language communicative competence should be evaluated.

DISCUSSION

The problem of foreign language communicative competence development was discussed among national researchers (Kostikova et al, 2019; Kostikova et al, 2024; Holubnycha et al. 2021; Gunerathne & Marikar, 2023). The problem of training students for technical specialties was discussed among national researchers too (Lebedeva, Norik, Lebedev, 2022).

CONCLUSION

The pan-European language proficiency levels are a flexible framework, not a rigid one. While educators can still design their own learning levels, using the standard categories enhances understanding and ensures objective assessments. Additionally, these levels can be adapted to specific professional needs and form the foundation for technology-driven assessment models, aligning with the competence-based approach in foreign language training for non-language majors. This system is expected to evolve with experience, further supporting its effectiveness in achieving educational goals.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:

ХАРАКТЕРИСТИКА РІВНІВ СФОРМОВАНОСТІ ІНШОМОВНОЇ КОМУНІКАТИВНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ СТУДЕНТІВ ТЕХНІЧНИХ СПЕЦІАЛЬНОСТЕЙ

В статті розглядається питання щодо рівнів сформованості іншомовної комунікативної компетентності студентів технічних спеціальностей. Наводиться характеристика відповідних рівнів.

Мета – визначити та охарактеризувати рівні сформованості іншомовної комунікативної компетентності студентів технічних спеціальностей. **Завдання:** з'ясувати сутність поняття «рівень іншомовної комунікативної компетентності»; проаналізувати класифікації рівнів володіння іноземною мовою; на основі аналізу охарактеризувати критерії рівнів сформованості іншомовної комунікативної компетентності студентів технічних спеціальностей.

Методологія. Методами дослідження є аналіз та узагальнення відповідних наукових матеріалів з метою збору та представлення результатів, а також формулювання висновків.

Результати. Поняття рівня володіння іноземною мовою можна визначити як здатність студента граматично правильно і комунікативно прийнятно оформляти свої іншомовні висловлювання для вирішення певних функціональних завдань спілкування, що передбачає володіння певною сукупністю мовних та соціокультурних знань, умінь та навичок. Багато систем рівнів орієнтовані (у практичних цілях) на три основні рівні: елементарний (*elementary*); середній (*intermediate*); просунутий (*advanced*), які можуть поділятися на підрівні залежно від мети визначення рівня. У результаті виникає шість рівнів, де кожен із трьох основних ділиться на один більш просунутий і один менш просунутий, порівняно з самим базовим рівнем володіння іноземною мовою.

Система рівнів володіння іноземною мовою тісно пов'язана з системою контролю, оцінки та самооцінки рівня сформованості іншомовної комунікативної компетентності. Кожному типу іншомовної комунікативної компетентності відповідає свій рівень навченості, який відрізняється кінцевими цільовими установками. Рівень навченості (планований результат) є проекцією мети на зміст навчання і передбачає врахування умов навчання.

Враховуючи характеристики компонентного складу іншомовної комунікативної компетентності, досвід розробки нових моделей контролю, можна виділити параметри та критерії, необхідні для оцінки рівня сформованості іншомовної комунікативної компетентності

студентів. Метою підсумкового контролю є встановлення відповідності між рівнем іншомовної комунікативної компетентності та вимогами навчальної програми з англійської мови для студентів технічних спеціальностей.

Висновок. Таким чином, при розгляді питань, пов'язаних з контролем іншомовних знань, умінь та навичок (визначення цілей, змісту, формату іспитів, критеріїв оцінки), слід враховувати як міжнародні стандарти рівня володіння іноземною мовою, так і сучасні вітчизняні вимоги, які подаються у навчальних програмах та підручниках з іноземної мови. Іншими словами, об'єктом контролю мають стати всі компоненти іншомовної комунікативної компетентності.

Зокрема, загальноєвропейська система рівнів володіння мовою може бути адаптована до цілей професійної освіти і може послужити основою для різних діагностичних моделей, які забезпечують технологізацію компетентнісного підходу у процесі іншомовної підготовки в умовах немовного закладу вищої освіти.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: багаторівнева модель, загальноєвропейська система, рівні володіння мовою, іншомовна комунікативна компетентність, компетентнісний підхід, рівні володіння іноземною мовою.

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TEACHING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE AND SMARTER LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS IN THE NEW AGE OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

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Zahra Sadat ROOZAFZAI



Ph.D. in English Applied Linguistics: TEFL, Assistant Professor, ACECR Institute of Higher Education, Isfahan, Iran; A One-year Study in Humanities (Third Level).

✉ E-Mail: Zahra80r@gmail.com

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8376-6818>

ABSTRACT

The fully online and electronic environments of today as the only way of teaching/learning require some reviews and appraisals of the paradigms of digital transformation, including the paradigm of smart education. Therefore, the current study investigated the paradigm change of the smart education to the smarter education, leading to the review of Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL).

Purpose. *The current study intends to update both the traditional theories and practice of TEFL in the new age of digital transformation, which will have effective theoretical and empirical implications in the practice of TEFL in smarter learning environments.*

Methodology. *The present study was designed in two phases and employed a qualitative methodology with a descriptive design. It tried to answer how this paradigm change affects the theories of TEFL.*

Results. *In the first phase of the study, the Preliminary Framework for Smart Learning Environments by Spector was adapted and expanded into the Model of Smarter Learning Environments based on the challenges and opportunities brought about by the new age of digital transformation. The second phase involved reviewing Krashen's Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis, exploring its relevance and applicability to TEFL in the context of the Model of Smarter Learning Environments. The aim of this phase was to identify the*

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potential challenges and opportunities associated with managing TEFL classroom resources within this new framework.

*The investigation **concluded** that the mandatory application of fully online teaching, in the case of TEFL, which resulted from the New-Age Digital Transformation, requires reviewing the traditional theories of Second Language Learning and Teaching. It has created challenges and opportunities in the class resource management. Finally, providing digital facilities and training was proposed as a solution to the challenges.*

KEYWORDS: *Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis, Class Resource Management, Model of Smarter Learning Environments, New-Age Digital Transformation, Preliminary Framework for Smart Learning Environments.*

INTRODUCTION

The exploitation of technology in educational contexts has been growing worldwide and has facilitated the process of teaching and learning and enhanced the outcome of education and the attainment of more desired objectives. The integration of cutting-edge technology, such as audiovisual tools and multimedia devices, into educational settings has had a profound impact on teaching and learning practices since the 1960s (Marty, 1981).

Early computer assisted language learning (CALL) programs primarily displayed text on screens, and learners could only interact with the material by typing in their responses. However, with the continued advancement of technology, more interactive and immersive learning experiences have become possible, offering a wealth of new opportunities for language learners and educators alike. Then it advanced to computational linguistics and human language technologies (HLT).

Then it came up to the use of artificial intelligence (AI), referred to as “intelligent CALL” (ICALL) (Matthews, 1994). The evolution of CALL has led to the widespread adoption of exploratory approaches in contemporary language education. These approaches include the use of web concordances, web-based CALL practices (Tribble & Jones, 1990), and data-driven learning (DLL) (Johns & King, 1991).

In parallel, interactive multimedia materials were also being developed and utilized. With the advent of the World Wide Web in 1993, web-based and hybrid approaches to CALL emerged, incorporating the web and CD-ROM multimedia (Felix, 2001). This was followed by the introduction of web-authoring programs that made it easier for educators to create and customize learning materials, reducing the need for advanced computer science knowledge (Bickerton, 1999; Bickerton, Stenton & Temmermann, 2001).

This do-it-yourself) approach has democratized the creation of language learning resources, enabling educators to tailor materials to the specific needs and interests of their learners. Today, there are many different professional associations in the world grouped under the associations of World CALL (<https://worldcall.org/>) such as the Australian Association for Technology Enhanced Language Learning (ATELL), the International Association for Language Learning Technology (IALLT), and the European professional association for CALL (EUROCALL).

As it can be noticed, although these technological innovations were enhancing and reinforcing the processes and products of teaching and learning, they were perceived as a *should*, not a *must*. They were just tools, not a requirement. In other words, they were a choice, not a force; a feed, not a need.

But now, with the unexpected outbreak of pandemics and similar episodes, electronic and web technologies in the teaching and learning practice have been transformed from an assistance (CALL: computer *assisted* language learning) to an essence without which this practice is not feasible. So, the world has gone through a New-Age Digital Transformation, evolving such that, in many cases, online and digital communication is the only way of development.

This digital transformation has recreated some recent impacts on the definitions and perceptions of the traditional paradigms, theories, thoughts, and concepts. As the contemporary age of digital practice transformed the traditional definitions, theories, and practices, so too have been created new effects on the contemporary theories, statements, paradigms, and methods in different fields of study. Therefore, the present study tries to explore two primary questions:

1. How has the digital transformation impacted Spector's (2014) Preliminary Framework for Smart Learning Environments, and what modifications are necessary to develop a more advanced educational model, known as the Model of Smarter Learning Environments?
2. How has Krashen's (1982) Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis been affected by theoretical revisions, and what are the practical challenges and opportunities associated with its application within the context of the Model of Smarter Learning Environments?

By addressing these questions, the study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how technology can be leveraged to enhance learning environments, especially TEFL environments, requiring revising language learning theories to adapt to the rapidly evolving and fully online digital contexts.

Regarding the related literature to establish the niche for the current study, the theories and practices of the TEFL and smart education must be reviewed. The most impressive theory in the field of second language acquisition is Krashen's (1982) Monitor Theory, a renowned framework comprising five key hypotheses that shed light on the language learning process.

These hypotheses include the Acquisition-Learning Hypothesis, the Natural Order Hypothesis, the Monitor Hypothesis, the Input Hypothesis, and the Affective Filter Hypothesis. These proposals have had a lasting impact on language teaching practices, providing valuable insights into how best to promote second-language proficiency. The scholarly literature has extensively documented the profound influence of Krashen's Monitor Theory on various aspects of second language acquisition research and pedagogy since the 1980s. However, it is important to note that the theory has also been met with substantial critical feedback and debate (Abukhattala, 2013).

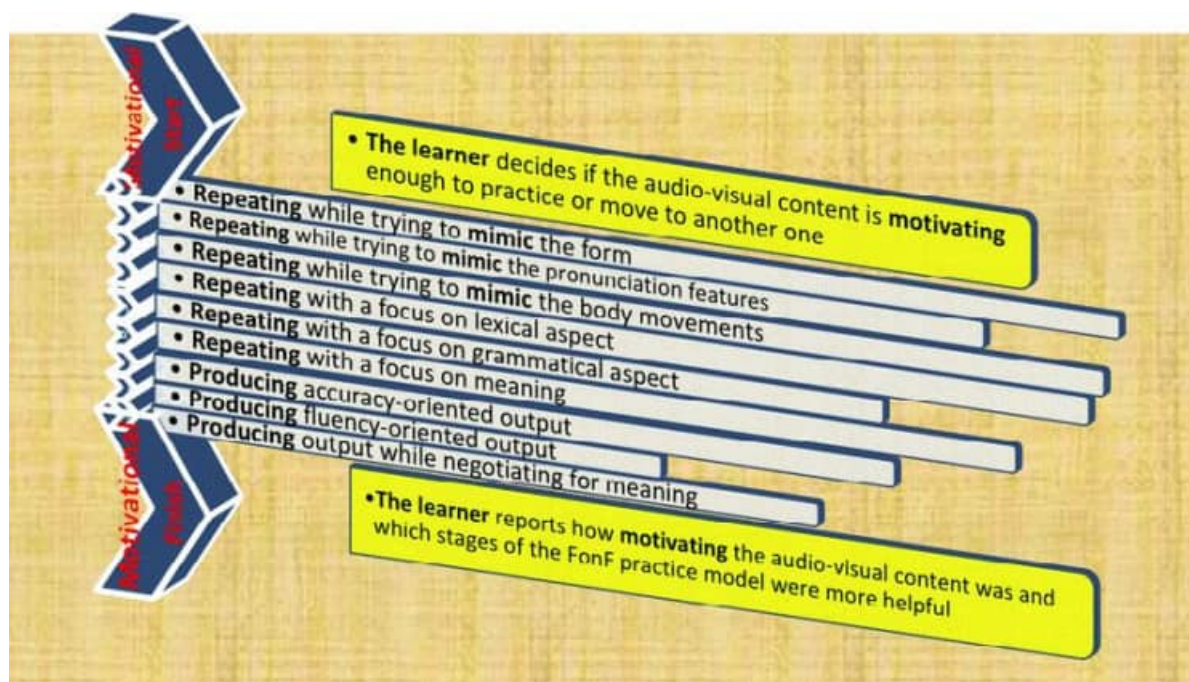
According to Ellis (1985), Littlewood (1984), and Krashen and Terrell (1983), students develop their second language skills in two different ways, namely acquisition and learning. To distinguish acquisition and learning, Krashen (1982) proposed that while

learning is an instructional, planned, and conscious mental process, acquisition is a natural, untutored, and unconscious conceptual process.

The focus of the former is on the form, whereas the focus of the latter is on meaning. Likewise, Michael Long's (1991) Focus on Form (FonF) model of language acquisition and teaching proposed an approach that differed significantly from the more traditional FonF model. While the former focuses on the message with occasional shift of attention from meaning to linguistic forms and structures, the latter focuses on the linear, discrete linguistic forms and items. The FonF practice model also boosts the learners' dynamic motivational levels. Figure 1 also demonstrates the FonF Practice Model by Bahari (2020) which is a digital and adaptive learning model for the learning and practice of form.

Figure 1

FonF Practice Model adopted from Bahari (2020)



Another model relevant to the acquisition/learning distinction is the usage-based model of language proposed by Langacker (1987) and developed by linguists like Tomasello (2000). It assumes language acquisition as the context-based mental processing and that there is a profound relation between linguistic structure and usage and actual language use. Tomasello viewed language acquisition as the building and actualizing of concepts through use. He states: "In usage-based models of language . . . all things flow from the actual usage events in which people communicate linguistically with one another." (Tomasello, 2000, p. 61–62).

Similarly, there is quite a number of other approaches, methods, and models proposed based on the tenets of the distinction between acquisition and learning such as the Communicative Approach and Communicative Language Teaching (CLT), which focuses on the interaction, communication, and language use as the both means and end of language education and acquisition (Savignon, 1997; Savignon, 2000). The incorporation and utilization of the capabilities of technology and CALL in programs such as distance learning and blended learning accelerate, facilitate, and reinforce the interactive process of foreign language learning.

Given that no single learning or teaching theory can be considered the ultimate solution for all educational settings, including online, on-campus, and blended environments, various theories have emerged, drawing upon major learning theories to address the unique challenges and opportunities presented by different contexts. One such theory is the Integrated Multimodal Model for Online Education proposed by Picciano (2017).

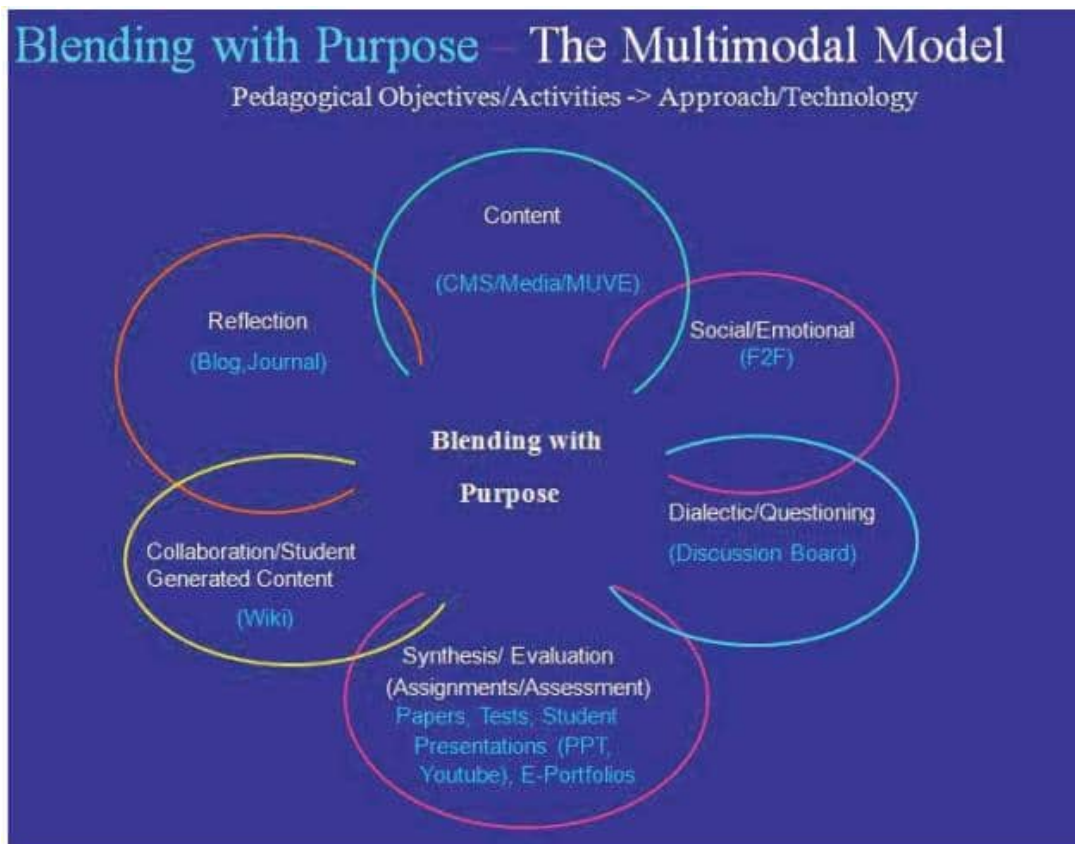
The model includes elements that might be required for a unified and integrated model for online education. Picciano’s model draws inspiration from Anderson’s (2011) Online Learning Model, which posits that none of the instruction is delivered through traditional face-to-face methods. Consequently, blended learning models, which incorporate some degree of face-to-face interaction, fall outside the scope of Anderson’s model (Picciano, 2017, p. 178).

In his own work, Picciano (2017, p.186) articulated this distinction by stating: “The proposed Multimodal Model for Online Education includes many of the major attributes of other learning and online education theories and models. For example, behaviorists will find elements of self-study and independent learning in adaptive software.”

Multimodal Model for Online Education consists of six basic pedagogical modules and expands on the Blending with Pedagogical Purpose Model (Picciano, 2009) which are indicated in figure 2 and adds several new components from Anderson and others, namely, community, interaction, and self-paced, independent instruction (ibid).

Figure 2

Blending with Pedagogical Purpose Model adopted from Picciano (2009)



As it is demonstrated in figure 2, the Blending with Pedagogical Purpose Model incorporates several key modules to facilitate effective learning and development:

1. Content: This module utilizes a variety of tools, such as visual aids, learning management systems (LMS), content management systems (CMS), media, and games, to deliver course materials and facilitate student engagement.
2. Social/emotional development: Fully online courses and programs offer opportunities for faculty members to provide social and emotional support as needed, while blended courses and programs may incorporate face-to-face interactions to address these aspects of learning.
3. Dialectic and questioning activities: Electronic discussion boards, such as Voice Thread, enable students to engage in critical thinking and reflective discussions.
4. Reflection: Pedagogical activities encourage students to reflect on their learning and share their insights via digital platforms, such as blogs and journaling, in both individual and group contexts.
5. Collaborative learning: Wikis and other digital tools facilitate group projects and collaborative writing assignments, promoting teamwork and communication skills.
6. Evaluation: CMSs/LMSs and other online platforms provide a variety of assessment methods to measure student progress and learning outcomes.

By incorporating these modules into the learning experience, the Blending with Pedagogical Purpose Model aims to create a well-rounded and engaging educational environment that supports student growth and development.

The Blending with Pedagogical Purpose Model includes the modules of content (visual aids LMS, CMS, media, games), social/emotional development (the development of the fully online courses and programs allows faculty members to provide some social and emotional support where possible and appropriate, and a face-to-face mode in blended courses and programs), dialectic and questioning activities (the electronic discussion board such as Voice Thread).

As well as reflection (pedagogical activities that ask students to reflect on what they learned and share their reflections with their peers, teachers, and fellow students via digital sites such as blogs and blogging whether as a group exercise or individual journaling), collaborative learning (wikis create a space for students to generate content to be shared with others in group projects and writing assignments, email, mobile technology, and other forms of electronic communication), evaluation (CMSs/LMSs and other online tools and platforms and technology providing different evaluation methods).

Picciano (2017, p. 181) considers the six components of the Blending with Pedagogical Purpose Model, described above, and “adds several new components from Anderson and others, namely, community, interaction, and self-paced/ independent instruction to form an integrated community of learning in which rich interaction, whether online or face-to-face, can be provided and blended across all modules.”

In this way he modifies and enlarges of the Blending with Pedagogical Purpose Model to the Multimodal Model of Online Education to be considered a model for online education in general. The leading feature of this model is that it supports the student learning, not distance learning. In other words, it has been developed as a subset of learning in general rather than a subsection of distance learning. For the learning

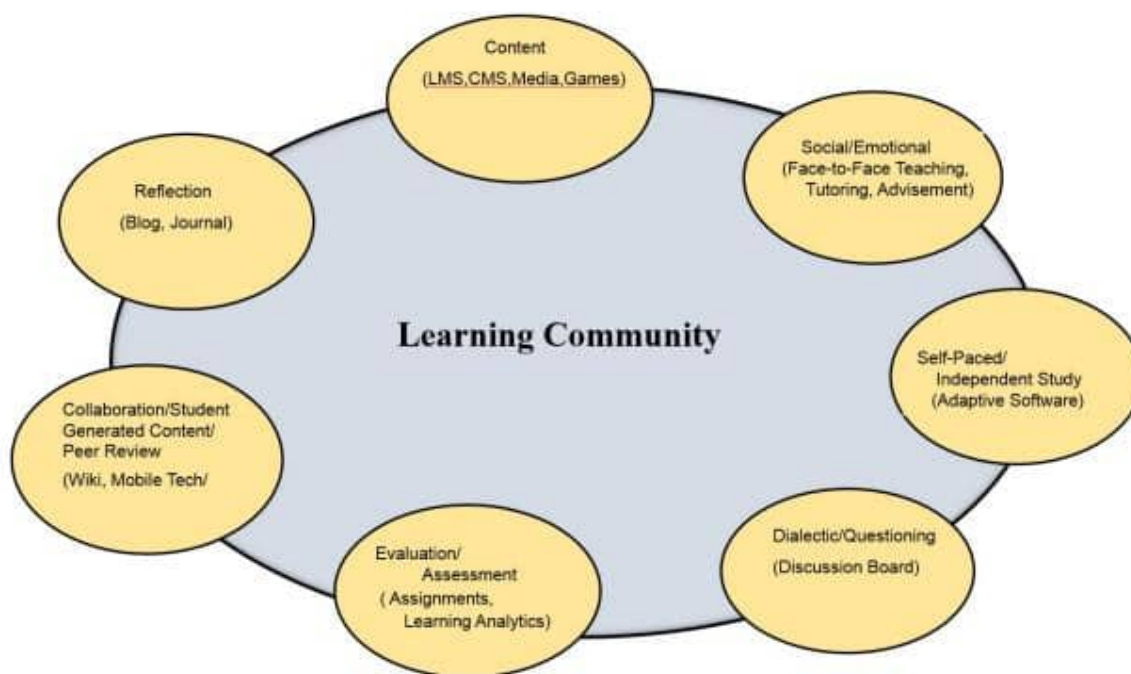
community of the Multimodal Model of Online Education, interaction is a basic required characteristic.

Moreover, the self-study/independent learning module “that Anderson emphasized as incompatible with any of the community-based models” is integrated with other modules. Furthermore, adaptive learning software plays a crucial role in self-study, offering a flexible and personalized approach to education. This type of software can function independently or be seamlessly integrated into other components of the Blending with Pedagogical Purpose Model (Picciano, 2017, p. 182).

By adapting to each student’s unique learning needs and preferences, adaptive learning software enhances the overall learning experience and facilitates individualized progress. Figure 3 demonstrates the Integrated Multimodal Model for Online Education proposed by Picciano (2017).

Figure 3

Integrated Multimodal Model for Online Education proposed by Picciano (2017)



In relation to the effect of technology and digital transformation on foreign language education, a study by Küçükler (2020, p. 643) found that “through technology, learning can be made more interactive and interesting to increase their engagement, social interactions and motivation.”

In addition to the possibility of faster and further interaction among students and teachers-and-students, the idea of personalized learning rose in the age of digital transformation as well; and sequentially and consequentially they have been intensified and extended in the new age of digital transformation. So, the concept of smart education as attracted much attention.

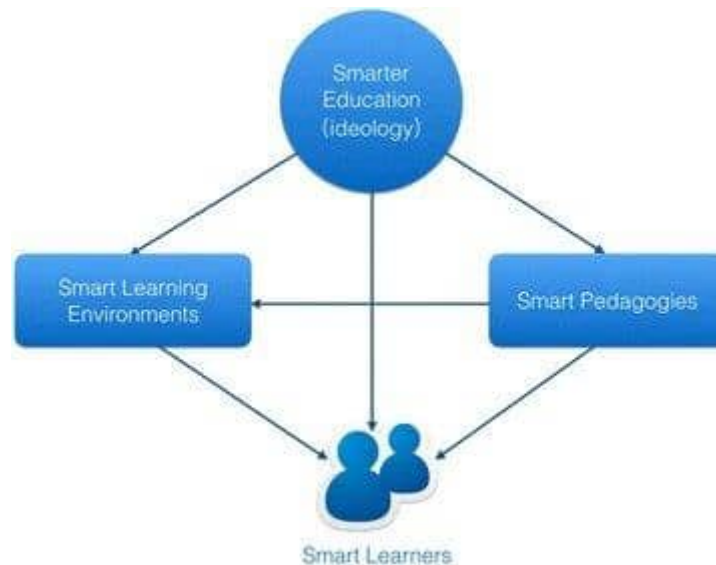
As such Zhu, Yu, and Riezebos (2016, p. 3) proposed a framework for smart education based on which learners can access digital resources and network and to gain both personalized and interactive learning. They stated that “the personal and smart

technologies make learners engaging in their learning and increase their independence in more open, connected and augmented ways by personally richer contexts”.

Zhu and He (2012, p. 6) stated that “the essence of smart education is to create intelligent environments by using smart technologies, so that smart pedagogies can be facilitated as to provide personalized learning services and empower learners”. Then Zhu, Yu, and Riezebos (2016) introduced the three-tier conceptual framework of smart education including smart environments, smart pedagogy, and smart learner. Figure 4 indicates the research framework of smart education.

Figure 4

Research framework of smart education adopted from Zhu, Yu and Riezebos (2016)



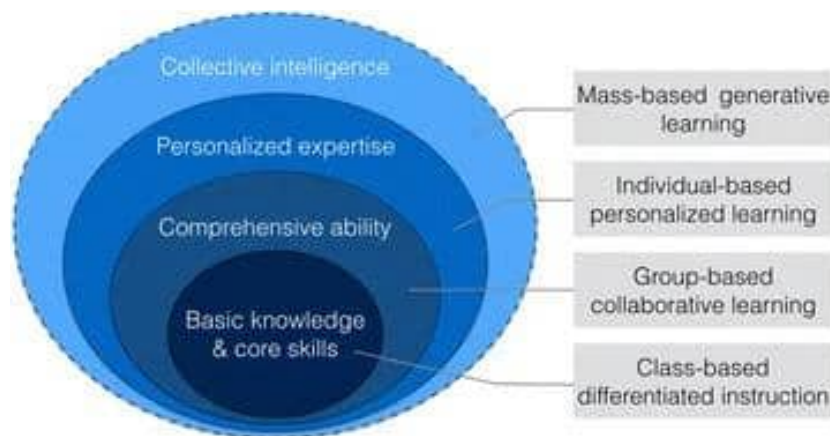
Their framework incorporates a four-level architecture of abilities necessary for students to thrive in the context of smart education and prepare them for the demands of modern society. These levels include:

1. Basic knowledge and core skills: This foundational level emphasizes the acquisition of fundamental knowledge and skills essential for navigating various aspects of life and work.
2. Comprehensive abilities: This intermediate level focuses on the development of broad competencies that transcend specific domains, equipping students with adaptability and versatility in diverse contexts.
3. Personalized expertise: This advanced level encourages students to cultivate specialized skills and knowledge that align with their unique interests and career aspirations, enabling them to excel in their chosen fields.
4. Collective intelligence: This highest level fosters the ability to collaborate effectively with others, leveraging diverse perspectives and skills to achieve common goals and drive innovation.

By encompassing these four levels of abilities, the framework provides a comprehensive roadmap for empowering students to thrive in the evolving landscape of smart education and society. Figure 5 demonstrates the elements of the learning structure of the framework and four-tier architecture of smart pedagogies adopted from Zhu, Yu, and Riezebos (2016).

Figure 5

Four-tier architecture of smart pedagogies adopted from Zhu, Yu and Riezebos (2016)



Therefore, in the digital transformation age, smart education necessitates the implementation of innovative and flexible learning and teaching resources and pedagogical approaches. These can be categorized into four distinct levels, each serving a unique purpose in facilitating student learning and growth:

1. Differentiated learning: This level involves tailoring instruction to meet the diverse needs and learning styles of individual students, ensuring that all learners have equitable access to meaningful educational experiences.
2. Collaborative learning: This level emphasizes the importance of group work and peer interaction, fostering critical thinking, communication, and teamwork skills through collaborative projects and activities.
3. Personalized learning: This level focuses on customizing the learning experience to align with students' unique interests, strengths, and goals, enabling them to take ownership of their education and pursue their passions.
4. Generative learning: This level encourages students to go beyond the acquisition of knowledge and develop the ability to create new ideas, solutions, and innovations, equipping them with the skills necessary to become active contributors to their fields and communities.

By incorporating these four levels of learning, smart education empowers students to develop a diverse range of abilities and skills, preparing them to thrive in an increasingly complex and interconnected world.

But as the matter of fact, the requirements and qualities of smart education in the new age of digital transformation are required to be reviewed and improved to be upgraded and promoted to smarter education models and paradigms. So, the purpose of the present study is to meet this requirement. It tries to update the smart learning environments to smarter learning environments, and also the principal theory and practice of second/foreign language teaching/learning in the smarter learning environments.

The purpose of the current study is to update both the traditional theories and practice of TEFL in the new age of digital transformation that will have effective theoretical and empirical implications in the practice of TEFL in smarter learning environments.

METHODOLOGY

The qualitative descriptive design is used in the present study to describe the *what* of the Model of Smarter Learning Environments, *where* it has come from, and the *why* of the proposition of the model regarding the phenomenon of the New-Age Digital Transformation where the application of fully online education is obligatory. The current study is also designed to review and study the case of one of the primary theories of TEFL that is the Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis proposed by Krashen (1982).

Attempts have been made to describe in what ways the principles of the theory have been influenced by the features of the Model of Smarter Learning Environments in the context of new-age digital transformation. Moreover, it is designed to describe and discuss the *what* of the opportunities and challenges of the practice of a TEFL class resource management in the Smarter Learning Environments.

RESULTS

The results of the current study are collected from a systematic review and overview of primary studies which contains statements and objectives related to the purpose of the available research to describe and discuss the research questions. They come from the logical and controversial explanations and classifications of the findings, figures, tables, and graphs.

Smarter Learning Environment

Though Zhu, Yu and Riezebos (2016, p. 2) stipulate that “intelligent technologies, such as cloud computing, learning analytics, big data, Internet of things (IoT), wearable technology and etc., promote the emergence of smart education,” smarter education comes from the fact that the digital and online media have developed to prevail in all living conditions, and teaching and learning peripheries.

Although there are various definitions for the concept of ‘smart,’ it is defined by Zhu, Yu, and Riezebos (2016, p. 6) as follows: “For software, ‘smart’ refers to adaptive and flexible [software]. It is efficient to carry out personalized learning for learner[s] according to their personal difference, with adaptive learning technologies (e.g., cloud computing, big data, learning analytics, adaptive engine, and etc.)”.

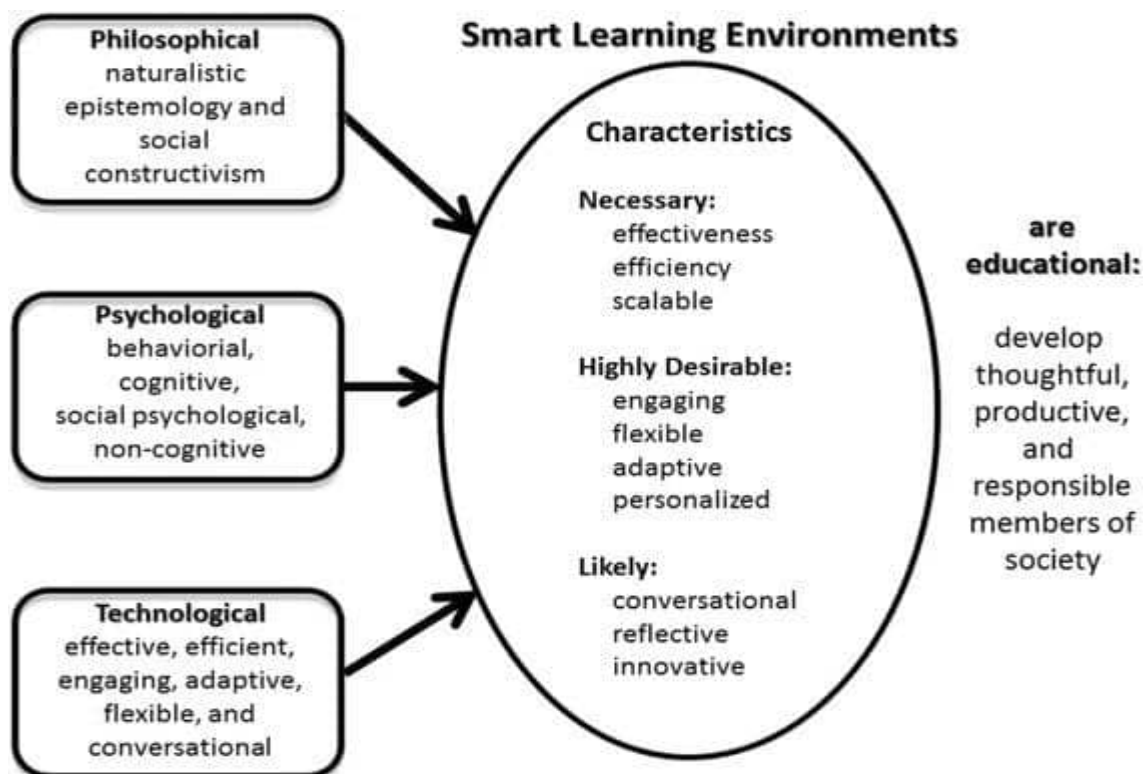
Apart from the global trend of the smart education, the concept of smarter learning environment requires to address not only the educational and technological topics of smart pedagogy and environments, but also the psychological and philosophical features of learning in a smarter environment.

As stated in Spector (2014, p. 2), features of smart learning environments might include “(a) collaboration, (b) struggling learners, (c) motivation.” Moreover, he counts the main attributes of being smart as being adaptive, effective, efficient, engaged, flexible, and thoughtful.

Furthermore, he presents the preliminary characteristics of the Smart Learning Environments in his framework as Effectiveness, Efficiency, Autonomous, Engaging, Flexible, Adaptive, Personalized, Conversational, Reflective, Innovative, and Self-organizing. Figure 6 shows the preliminary framework for smart learning environments adopted from Spector (2014).

Figure 6

A preliminary framework for smart learning environments adopted from Spector (2014)



So, to establish a smarter learning context, it is crucial to enhance the key attributes of the smart learning environment, both in terms of quality and quantity. In the new age of digital transformation, it is important to have strategic educational managements such as students' collaboration and interaction, their needs analysis, feedback analysis and so on. The appropriate adjustments to what a learner knows, has mastered, and wants to learn next are improved and reinforced in the production and application of the on-going innovative software, especially in the time of global events such as disease pandemics where there is no way round to communicate in the activities and processes of teaching and learning.

In a smarter learning environment both teachers and students must be involved. It is beyond a blended context. It is an all-virtual context. Unlike the result of a study by Abbasova and Mammadova (2019, p. 370), it is stated that "all the interviewed teachers emphasized the huge advantages of modern technologies applied during the teaching process for both teachers and students." In the New-Age Digital Transformation, all teachers and students need to be trained the presentation and practice of teaching and learning.

So, there is no way round unless teachers acknowledge the global digital educational platforms and practices effectively as the only essential and educational instrument, utilize the available online and digital media tools, provide students with regular updates, participate in the training sessions and panel meetings with other teachers and technicians, and work together with students in helping them master new learning opportunities.

In addition to teachers, digital tools and soft wares, materials and institutions, for a new-age digital transformation to be more effective, efficient, autonomous, engaging, flexible, adaptive, personalized, conversational, reflective, innovative, and self-organizing, it needs student`s cooperation, and adaptation, too. To support language learning, an interactive environment is crucial. Students should be reactive and proactive, but not overactive, when using technology, according to Panagiotidis et al. (2018).

As Abbasova and Mammadova (2019, p. 368) found “all the teachers seem to indicate at least one drawback. Since the technology became a fundamental temptation of youth, it might be misused during the classes.” A study by Suharti et al. (2020), along with several other investigations like Alwehebi (2021), Luan et al. (2020), Meşe and Sevilen (2021), and Susanti (2020), highlights the positive impact of online language learning platforms on student engagement and participation in the EFL learning process.

These studies demonstrate that utilizing digital tools and resources can enhance the overall learning experience, fostering greater interaction and involvement among learners. By leveraging the capabilities of technology, educators can create more dynamic and effective EFL learning environments that support students’ growth and development as language users.

What shifts the paradigm of the digital transformation to the New-Age Digital Transformation is not just the use of technology, tools, and software but the conditions in which the use of digital and online learning tools and settings is the only way. It has, therefore, changed the smart education to the smarter education which proposes and imposes some requirements in the areas of psychology and philosophy, too.

As discussed above, Spector’s (2014) framework for a smart learning environment is built upon three key foundations: technology, psychology, and epistemology. This framework also encompasses three categories of characteristics that contribute to the effectiveness of such an environment:

1. Necessary characteristics: These are the fundamental elements that must be present for a learning environment to be considered smart.
2. Highly desirable characteristics: While not absolutely essential, these characteristics significantly enhance the overall quality and effectiveness of the learning experience.
3. Conversational characteristics: These features encourage interaction and dialogue among learners and facilitators, promoting a more engaging and collaborative learning environment.

By integrating these foundational and characteristic elements, Spector’s framework provides a comprehensive approach to designing and implementing smart learning environments that foster effective and meaningful education.

A smarter learning environment is composed of all the mentioned characteristics with the addition of two other indicators that are prevailing and entailing. In fact, basically, the smarter, digital and online environments of new-age learning paradigm, employing educational technology are a pervasive and mandatory provision. In reality, these two indications as mandatory requirements and requisites have changed the educational and managerial paradigms of the digital transformation to the new age of digital transformations.

Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis in the Model of Smarter Learning Environment

According to the Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis of Krashen’s (1982) Monitor Theory there are two ways of in-taking and developing a-second-language skills; one of them is acquisition which is automatic and subconscious; the other is learning which is subconscious and instructional. Abukhattala (2013) summarizes the hypothesis in a table. Table 1 demonstrates the distinction between Krashen’s acquisition and learning adopted from Abukhattala (2013).

Table 1

The distinctions between Krashen`s acquisition and learning adopted from Abukhattala (2013)

Learning	Acquisition
Conscious process	Subconscious process
Knowing the rules	Picking up the learning
Results in accuracy	Results in accuracy and fluency
Formal, traditional teaching helps	Formal, traditional teaching does not help
Available for correction	Available for Automatic correction

As it is indicated in table 1 the underlying key implications are immersion (reception), attention (process) and production.

The Model of Smarter Learning Environments builds upon Spector’s (2014) framework for smart environments by incorporating not only the necessary, highly desirable, and likely features, but also by providing a comprehensive approach to creating a pervasive online/offline learning environment.

This model is particularly relevant in contexts where an Internet-based and computer-mediated learning approach is essential, such as learning platforms, schools, and situations like disease pandemics, and metaverse environments. By addressing the diverse needs and challenges of contemporary education, the Model of Smarter Learning Environments offers a robust and adaptable framework for fostering effective learning and growth.

In other words, the smarter learning environments are fully effective (acceptable outcome), efficient (cost effective), scalable (beyond a small number of practices), autonomous (a reactive learning service to learners to help organize their goals, processes, outcomes, etc.), engaging (active participation, motivation), flexible (adjustable to changes and resources), and adaptive and personalized, (adjustable to specific learners’ needs and competencies, their cognitive and non-cognitive learning and life styles, etc.), as well as conversational (providing [group] dialogues), innovative (emerging and new technology or innovative use of technology), self-organizing (rearranging resources and mechanisms through interaction with learners), pervasive (all-surrounding digital learning environment and extensive availability and use of smart devices everywhere), and mandatory (indispensable and obligatory use of online and offline e-learning devices and programs as the only way of instruction and learning).

The pervasiveness and extensive need to digital learning environment in the promoted version of smart learning environment of Spector (2014) henceforth named smarter learning environment provides learners with more significant exposure and immersion to learning a foreign language.

According to the Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis, when learners are undergoing poverty of input and are exposed to a foreign language just in the formal and instruction-based classrooms they need to learn not acquire a language. In other words, they need to make a conscious effort, to memorize and know rules and vocabulary.

On the other hand, when the learner is exposed to a second language especially at lower ages, the learner is not trying to memorize and learn the rules but just picks up the learning (Shatz, 2007; Chomsky, 1980). Therefore, smarter learning environments create a rich input environment of $i+1$ for language learners, as suggested by Krashen's (1982) Input Hypothesis.

This approach promotes effective learning by providing learners with diverse and challenging materials that slightly exceed their current language proficiency level. By leveraging technology, educators can foster more meaningful language acquisition and support learners' growth toward greater fluency and mastery. So, in this way, the smarter learning environment changes the paradigm of the learning attempts of a foreign language to the natural-like and subconscious acquisition and picking up of a foreign/second language.

Moreover, regarding both the strong and weak versions of communicative language teaching (CLT), this ubiquity feature of smarter learning environments creates an extensive use of digital learning environments, especially in the online environments for learners, which increases communication, interaction, engagement and immersion.

In short, CLT is an approach to second/foreign language teaching that aims at developing communicative competence through interaction and problem-solving tasks. Howatt (1984) introduced a "strong" and a "weak" version of CLT. The "strong" version stresses that language is acquired through the using of language in communication. The weak version stresses emphasize providing opportunities for learners to use the language for communicative purposes. In other words, strong version claims that "using the language to learn it." while the weak version entails "learning to use the language."

The use-based approaches of language learning such as weak or strong CLT, implies the Output Hypothesis and the production of language too. The Comprehensible Output Hypothesis developed by Merrill Swain (1995) claims that comprehensible output enhances the learners' language input due to the mental and cognitive processes connected with the production of language.

In other words, language acquisition involves production gaps between their knowledge and output, and bridging them through learning and experimentation. The Noticing Function leads to the Hypothesis-Testing Function, where learners modify their output, seek feedback, and refine their language skills, moving closer to their communication output.

Upon receiving and processing feedback on their language output, learners engage in the Metalinguistic Function, a critical component of language acquisition. During this

stage, learners actively reflect on the linguistic knowledge they have gained, integrating it into their understanding of the target language. The all-present opportunity made in the smarter learning environment for the extensive and indispensable reception of input, production of output, and use of a foreign language has changed the paradigm of the learning to acquisition principles and practice.

It also eradicates the problem of the Output Hypothesis proposed by Krashen, stating that learners make rare and less input. In a smarter learning environment, where digital media and online interaction serve as the only modes of communication, students are compelled to actively produce language output in order to engage with the learning materials and interact with their peers.

This situation aligns with Krashen's (2003) Need Hypothesis, which posits that language acquisition is most effective when learners have a genuine need to communicate and express themselves. In the Smarter Learning Environments which are only digital and/or online, students need to communicate only through the digital tools. Moreover, in the context of online learning, the virtual environment can help reduce affective filters, allowing students to express their true selves more comfortably.

As a result, learners are more likely to actively produce language and engage with the learning materials, fostering more meaningful and effective language acquisition. Besides, the online and smarter learning environments make students produce more simultaneous, less monitoring and more fluent production; in this way, the principles of the learning paradigm change into the acquisition paradigm.

Regarding the high attention and speed of the processing of language in a collaborative dialogue, Wells (2000, p. 73) points out that "one of the characteristics of utterances, whether spoken or written, is that it can be looked at as simultaneously process and product: as 'saying' and as 'what is said'."

According to the psychological and philosophical foundations of the smarter learning environments, the interaction of socio-cultural, cognitive and behavioral thoughts, theories and practices are realized and enhanced in the widespread and ceaseless virtual learning media.

For instance, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory of Cognitive Development highlights the role of social and cultural factors in shaping cognitive abilities, such as language development, attention, memory, and problem-solving skills. According to this theory, proposed by psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1896–1934), these cognitive abilities are not innate, but rather are constructed and facilitated through social interactions and cultural contexts (Langford, 2005).

Similarly, the theory of social constructivism in education states that learners actively, socially and contextually construct knowledge and create mental representations in different ways rather than just passively and individualistically take in the transmitted information.

One way is engaging learners in the social meaning-making tasks to build up new knowledge upon their pre-existing and personalized information and experiences. Social constructivism comes from Lev Vygotsky (1974), and is closely connected to cognitive constructivism with the added influence of societal, social, and peer elements. In other words, he believes that cognitive functions are the products of social interactions. The

process of development and learning is through social interaction and that social learning actually leads to cognitive development.

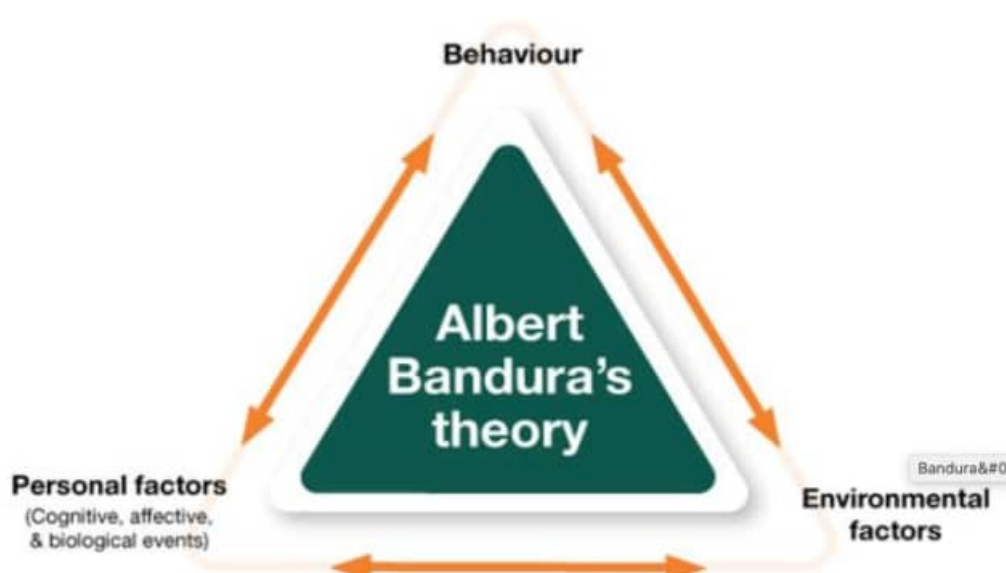
So, in the model of smarter learning environments, where the prevalent existing e-learning media is the only channel of teaching have created the utmost interactional opportunity for teachers and learners, Krashen's learning might be changed into acquisition in his principle of distinction between acquisition and learning. The New-Age Digital Transformation has provided the cognitive development of learning to take place across an utterly interactive environment. Therefore, the paradigm of learning as a rule-teaching, corrective, formal, and traditional instruction has changed into the use-based and practical, productive, less formal, and global teaching.

Moreover, observation, modeling, and imitation have founded a social theory of learning. Bandura's (1977) research on social learning theory highlighted the importance of observational learning, particularly through the imitation of symbolic models presented in various media forms. These symbolic models, such as those found in movies, videos, digital media, and podcasts, can serve as powerful learning tools, demonstrating behaviors and skills that learners can emulate. Students watch and listen to them attentively and envision the way actors and characters react and feel, and act like them. He proposed the Social of Theory of Learning.

Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory interconnects three fundamental theories of psychology and philosophy of learning; namely behaviorist, cognitivist and social constructivist theories of learning. Figure 7 indicates Bandura's Theory of Social Learning adopted from Kurt (2020).

Figure 7

Bandura's Theory of Social Learning adopted from Kurt (2020)



Social Learning Theory of Albert Bandura agrees with the behaviorist theory in the way that behavior is learned from the environment through the process of observational learning (McLeod, 2016). However, he argues that observation alone may not be sufficient enough to learning. He asserts that while most human behavior is learned through

observation, imitation, and modeling; a learner can observe, imitate, or model something but might not learn it in the behaviorist sense of learning, that is a permanent change in behavior.

So, in addition to these three basic tenets of his theory which connects it to the social theory of learning, he also cites four necessary elements for learning as attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. So, learners' motivation and mental state also influence the learning. The last factors of his theory connect Bandura's learning theory to those of cognitive-developmental theories (Kurt, 2020).

However, Spector (2014) regards some emotions and habits as non-cognitive aspects of thought and behavior. Therefore, in the Model of Smarter Learning Environments, where there are boundless, extensive, and pervasive opportunities for the digital and internet mediated interaction with peer learners and teachers worldwide, learners can exercise the three tenets and four elements of Bandura's learning theory effectively, functionally, and competently.

In brief, the Model of Smarter Learning Environments is the updated and upgraded Spector's (2014) Preliminary Framework of Smart Learning Environment, required by the New-Age Digital Transformation, which would be connected to the International Association for Smart Learning Environments (IASLE) per se (<http://iasle.net/>).

In other words, the technological advancement has made a transition of digital transformation to the New-Age Digital Transformation. It has made requirements, in turn, on the revision of the models, paradigms and frameworks of the smart education.

So, building upon Spector's (2014) Preliminary Framework of Smart Learning Environment, this study presents a Model of Smarter Learning Environments. In this model, one of the key theories of language acquisition in the field of TEFL, Krashen's (1982) Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis, was reevaluated within the context of smarter learning environments. In the next section, the class administration, application, and implication of the reviewed Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis in the Model of Smarter Learning Environments will be investigated.

TEFL Resource Management in the Model of Smarter Learning Environments

One of the key components that plays a leading role to the effective learning of students is class management. Class management is an issue that is influenced by many factors, such as resource management which is the focus of the present discussion.

Human and nonhuman class resources include students, material/gadget, syllabus/curriculum, time and space which should be managed by the teachers. They are all involved to create the most conducive and optimal student learning conditions. Resource management, in the current study, involves making a strategic plan for organizing and using the instructional resources. Instructional resources include all the materials, tools and means that an instructor uses to implement instruction/syllabus and achieve instructional objectives.

The central feature of an effective teaching is the selection of instructional materials that fit the learning environment and meet the teaching needs. Five types of instructional materials can be classified as print (e.g., textbooks and handouts), audio (e.g., microphone, podcast, and CDs), visual (e.g., charts and photographs), audiovisual

(e.g., multimedia, videos, and screencasts), electronic interactive instructional materials (e.g., computers and tablets, Internet and social media).

In the Model of Smarter Learning Environments, where the line between acquisition and learning has also faded away, the common instructional materials are audio, visual, audiovisual, and electronic interactive materials. The use of these nonprint instructional materials in the Model of Smarter Learning Environments and fully online teaching might bring challenges and opportunities.

There are many active and potential opportunities and challenges, at the same time, in using online education especially TEFL regarding the collaboration and connectivity among users, and access to a number of different sources. Regarding the opportunities, teachers become more effective since they can use a variety of different online teaching and learning tools, such as videos and podcasts, as part of their instructional plans, and expand their lesson plans beyond the materials in print to the online and digital resources.

Moreover, as the Smarter Learning Environments are more scalable, they can manage to carry out the flexible, personalized, customized, and adaptive syllabus for students with different learning style, speed, and backgrounds. Furthermore, Teachers become more efficient because there are plenty of various digital and online instructional materials which are affordable or provided by the institute or even free for both teachers and students, and accordingly they are more innovative, available, reasonable, and easier to share.

Hence teachers will have a good deal of material options in their lesson plans and class managements. In addition, where there is no geographical lines and limits but more connectivity, teachers, especially TEFL teachers, can enjoy the worldwide connections, increased interactions and collaborations with their students and native colleagues. It also generates a more conversational, reflective, and engaging atmosphere for students to take advantage of native speakers and peer learning.

Besides, the flexibility of time and location leads to higher rate of students' attendance because online classes can be attended from any location. Therefore, by and large, the Smarter Learning Environments provide the, TEFL teachers with opportunity to manage their class resources the way in which the learning process and activity change into that of acquisition.

On the other hand, the Smarter Learning Environments cause teachers to face with challenges in their class resource management. One of the frequent and common challenges is about the accuracy, reliability and validity of students' language proficiency assessment.

Although fully online and digital education can exploit a variety of soft wares for testing, it makes the TEFL teachers less assured with the written (especially multiple-choice tests) and spoken modes of tests partly because of the standardization of online and digital assessment tools, poor internet connection, or any technical glitch, lack of facilities and infrastructure in some remote and less urban areas, and poor digital literacy, and partly because of the ethical issues on the side of the test takers. The validity of a test is to measure the trait it is designed to measure (Guion, 1980).

If the students make use of some aids during the test, it impairs the validity and generalizability of the scores. It will also damage the reliability of test scores. The reliability of test scores is the extent to which they are consistent across different administrations (Franzen, 2011). So, implementing valid and reliable assessment, especially in achievement tests, is one of the challenges of the fully online TEFL education. In addition to the assessment, poor knowledge of digital media use on the side of both teachers and students can create considerable challenges in the practice of teaching.

Another challenge of the Smarter Learning Environments is about students' attention. While the online education increases students' attendance, it decreases their attention. Lack of in person interaction leads to the lack of physical connection and less emotional communication which can detach students from classes and class settings. Moreover, students might be struggling with the digital tools during the class and miss the track of instruction. Furthermore, if students attend the online classes from a crowded place or a workplace, the environment will distract them and disrupt their learning.

DISCUSSION

As it has been discussed earlier, the principles of Krashen`s Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis to distinguish learning from acquisition can be correct and applicable in the age of non-or-less technology. Today, in the age when digital technology is not only a device but only an environment of learning and teaching, the theory and practice of Krashen's hypothesis needs to be updated for the new-age smarter learning environments.

So firstly, a smart learning environment, the model of Spector (2014) has been selected and discussed to be promoted and updated. Then a theory of language learning and teaching, the Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis of Krashen (1982) has been discussed and reviewed for the practice in the new-age digital classes, and class resource managements. The opportunity for teaching in the fully online learning environment creates challenges for both teachers and students. Therefore, it requires training, tools, and resources to be implemented and applied.

CONCLUSIONS

Many practical designers are operating under the constraints of theoretical backgrounds. The way learning and learning process is theoretically defined has important implications in the way it can be practiced. Different learning theories provide instructional designers and practitioners with related instructional strategies and techniques for the facilitating and enhancing of learning. Moreover, with the advancement of technology and development of human life style, and biolinguistic and biological evolution across generations, both primary and contemporary theories need appraising.

So, one of the primary objectives of the present study was to examine Krashen's (1982) Acquisition/Learning Hypothesis in the context of fully online education in TEFL. It resulted in the proposition that in the New-Age Digital Transformation in which fully online education is a pervasive must, the distinction between acquisition and learning has been dissolving.

In addition to the theory, the practice of different fields of education needs to be appraised and upgraded in the New-Age Digital Transformation especially in particular episodes such as disease pandemics. Thus, the preliminary framework for Smart Learning Environments introduced by Spector (2014) was reviewed and promoted to the Model of Smarter Learning Environments.

Finally, tying a theory to its practice, the opportunities and challenges of the class resource managements of the new-age digital practice of TEFL in the Smarter Learning Environments were described and discussed. It is concluded that apart from numerous advantages of the new-age practice of TEFL in the Smart Learning Environments, providing required facilities and training for both teachers and students is still a challenge which should be dealt with by the policy makers and administrators.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

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ABSTRACT [in Persian]:**چکیده****محیط های یادگیری هوشمندتر در عصر جدید تحول دیجیتال: تدریس زبان انگلیسی به عنوان یک زبان خارجی**

محیط های کاملاً آنلاین و الکترونیکی امروزی به عنوان تنها راه آموزش/یادگیری نیازمند بررسی و ارزیابی پارادایم های تحول دیجیتال از جمله پارادایم آموزش هوشمند است. بنابراین، مطالعه حاضر به بررسی تغییر پارادایم آموزش هوشمند به آموزش هوشمندتر در مورد آموزش زبان انگلیسی به عنوان زبان خارجی (TEFL) پرداخته است. بدین منظور پژوهش حاضر در دو مرحله و با استفاده از روش کیفی با طرح توصیفی طراحی شد. سعی شد پاسخ دهد که این تغییر پارادایم چگونه بر نظریه های TEFL تأثیر می گذارد. مرحله اول، ارتقای چارچوب اولیه برای محیط های یادگیری هوشمند (Spector, 2014) به مدل محیط های یادگیری هوشمندتر بر اساس پیامدهای عصر جدید در تحول دیجیتال بود. مرحله دوم بررسی فرضیه اکتساب/یادگیری (Krashen, 1982) در عصر جدید تحول دیجیتال، و بحث در مورد فرصت ها و چالش های کاربرد مدیریت منابع کلاس در مدل محیط های یادگیری هوشمندتر بود. این تحقیق به این نتیجه رسید که استفاده اجباری از آموزش کاملاً آنلاین، در مورد TEFL، که حاصل تحول دیجیتال عصر جدید است، نیاز به بررسی نظریه های سنتی یادگیری و آموزش زبان دوم دارد. این تحول چالش ها و فرصت هایی را در مدیریت منابع کلاس ایجاد کرده است. در نهایت ارائه امکانات و آموزش دیجیتال به عنوان راه حلی برای چالش ها پیشنهاد شد. هدف مطالعه حاضر که به روزرسانی نظریه ها و عملکرد سنتی TEFL در عصر جدید تحول دیجیتال است، پیامدهای نظری و تجربی مؤثری در اجرای TEFL در محیط های یادگیری هوشمندتر خواهد داشت.

عبارات کلیدی

فرضیه اکتساب-یادگیری، مدیریت منابع کلاسی، مدل محیط های یادگیری هوشمندتر، تحول دیجیتال عصر جدید، چارچوب اولیه برای محیط های یادگیری هوشمند

АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:**ВИКЛАДАННЯ АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЯК ІНОЗЕМНОЇ ТА РОЗУМНІШЕ НАВЧАЛЬНЕ СЕРЕДОВИЩЕ В НОВУ ЕПОХУ ЦИФРОВОЇ ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЇ**

Сучасні повністю онлайніві та електронні середовища як єдиний спосіб викладання/навчання вимагають деяких оглядів та оцінок парадигм цифрової трансформації, включаючи парадигму розумної освіти. Таким чином, дослідження вивчало зміну парадигми розумної освіти на більш розумну освіту у випадку викладання англійської мови як іноземної (TEFL).

Метою дослідження є оновлення як традиційних теорій, так і практики викладання англійської мови як іноземної (TEFL) у нову епоху цифрової трансформації, що матиме ефективні теоретичні та емпіричні наслідки для практики викладання англійської мови як іноземної (TEFL) у розумніших навчальних середовищах.

Методологія. Це дослідження було розроблено у два етапи та використовувало якісну методологію з описовим дизайном. Воно намагалося відповісти, як зміна парадигми впливає на теорії викладання англійської мови як іноземної (TEFL).

Результати. Перший етап цього дослідження полягав у просуванні попередньої основи для розумних навчальних середовищ, пропонувану Спектор, до моделі розумніших навчальних середовищ на основі результатів нової епохи цифрової трансформації. Другий етап полягав у перегляді гіпотези розуміння/навчання, пропонувану Крашен, у нову епоху цифрової трансформації та обговоренні можливостей і викликів застосування управління ресурсами класу викладання англійської мови як іноземної (TEFL) у моделі розумніших навчальних середовищ.

Дослідження дійшло **висновку**, що обов'язкове застосування повного онлайн-викладання у випадку викладання англійської мови як іноземної (TEFL), яке стало результатом цифрової трансформації Нового часу, вимагає перегляду традиційних теорій вивчення та викладання іноземної мови. Це створило виклики та можливості в управлінні ресурсами класу. Нарешті, як вирішення проблем було запропоновано надання цифрових засобів і тренінгів.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: гіпотеза розуміння-навчання, управління ресурсами класу, модель розумніших навчальних середовищ, цифрова трансформація нового часу, попередня основа для розумних навчальних середовищ.

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ADDRESSING THE CHALLENGES FACING UNIVERSITY INSTRUCTORS IN TEST CONSTRUCTION PRACTICES IN TANZANIA

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Asia M. RUBEBA



Ph.D. in Education, Department of Psychology and Curriculum studies, College of Education, The University of Dodoma, Tanzania.

✉ **E-Mail:** rubeba2016@gmail.com

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7136-5486>

ABSTRACT

This study examined how instructors implement tests in their teaching and learning process and address the challenges facing them during practising test.

Methodology. *Three universities were chosen. The study was informed by transcendental phenomenological designs. Purposive sampling obtained responses from 48 key informants. Interviews, observations, and documentary analysis were used concurrently to gather data. The data were analysed thematically. Ethical issues were addressed.*

Results. *The analysis revealed that university instructors face multiple challenges, including a large number of students; a lack of manpower/instructors, resources, training on test construction and internal moderation commitment; and a heavy teaching load.*

*The study **concludes** that assessment is crucial for improving the teaching and learning process and thus determining its quality. Issues that should be addressed include mandatory workshops and seminars for instructors who have not undergone teacher education. Universities should ensure that sufficient human and material resources are available to strengthen assessment efforts aimed at improving teaching and learning.*

KEYWORDS: *Test, Test Construction Practices, University Instructors, Teaching and Learning, Assessment.*

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INTRODUCTION

Traditionally, a test is used for improving grades, and it is termed as assessment of learning. This implies that learning is measured through facts, and the information found in tests is used to judge student performance and report these findings (Earl & Katz 2006).

However, the paradigm shift (competence-based assessment) emphasises tests as part of the formative assessment that focuses on student learning difficulties (diagnostic view) and finding immediate solutions (Popham 2008). This process of assessment is termed as assessment for learning. It is an assessment that enables instructors to understand the ability of the student to comprehend the learned materials and whether or not they can apply it to a real-life situation. Besides, instructors would like to use tests to check whether students can critically analyse their learning.

Therefore, they use assessment as learning, which focuses on the ability of the student to link assessment and learning through self-reflection. Assessment is a process of developing and supporting metacognition of students (Earl & Katz, 2006). Students are capable of reflecting on prior knowledge and linking it to new knowledge into a meaningful way.

Test may be conceptualised as an assessment tool that comprises a list of items that relate to the desired learning outcomes during and by the end of course instruction (Babygeya, 1998; Enon, 1998; Gichuhi, 2014; Linn & Gronlund, 2000). Gronlund and Waugh (2009) explain the two major types of tests, that is, teacher-made tests and standardized tests.

Teacher made tests are normally prepared by a teacher for diagnosing student difficulties in learning and as result give feedback to the teacher about the progress of teaching and learning. Standardised tests, on the other hand, follow strict procedures in setting questions; in moderating, administering, and marking the tests; and interpreting and communicating the test results. Popham (2008) defines a standardised test as one designed to yield norm-referenced or criterion-referenced inferences that are administered, scored, and interpreted in a standard predetermined manner (p. 282).

The major aims of standardised tests are to measure the intelligence, aptitude, and achievement of students whose results can be interpreted based on norm-referenced. Furthermore, Babygeya (1998) points out that, when selecting the sample items, three questions need to be answered:

The first question is "*What has been taught?*". This invites the instructor to consider the instructional objectives. The second question is "*What is to be measured?*". This question requires the instructor to include some items and leave out others. The third question is, Are items in a test a representative sample? With regard to this question, the test developer needs to confirm the representation and precision of the objectives.

Therefore, content evidence related validation is determined by using a table of specification. This is a two way chart which shows the content coverage, domains and instructional objectives used during test development (Babygeya, 1998). Looking at the content evidence-related validity in setting the items in the test, instructors have to focus on the content covered, the domains to be measured, and the aims of the curricula.

Despite the fact that assessment is a complex activity that requires instructors to assess multiple skills, instructors are employed based on their academic qualifications, and promotional ranks with higher grade-point averages (GPAs) in their first degrees as a key requirement (Tanzania Commission for Universities, 2019; UDSM job advertisement for teaching Assistants and part time tutors, October, 2020).

With regard to this criterion, a majority of instructors, especially those who did not undergo teaching courses and teaching programmes, find themselves ineffective when it comes to demonstrating assessment skills that could enable them to effectively construct and administer tests in their classroom and in teaching and learning activities (Sanga, 2016).

Notably, taking into consideration the number of students in the classroom, the teaching workload, the insufficient number of instructors, and instructors' abilities, interests, perceptions, teaching experiences, expectations, and varying orientations and backgrounds (Sanga, 2016); various studies associate assessment competence literacy to the lack of training on teaching and assessment (Popham, 2009); and/or in-service assessment training (Komba & William, 2017).

Some university instructors lack competence in test item construction, as some of them were employed based on their academic performance alone and not based on their attending pedagogical training, which should accompany their academic credentials. This is because they are not professional teachers.

Rather, they are subject experts but not professional teachers who generally should possess knowledge on test construction and administration. In that way, they find that they are incompetent in teaching and in assessing teaching and learning activities. Again, during the course of action, they find that insufficient training is offered in their respective universities.

Thus, instructors need to be exposed and oriented to teaching and assessment skills in order for them to integrate teaching activities, learning activities, and expected learning outcomes (objectives) during teaching and learning processes (Sanga, 2016). Studies indicate that sending teachers for professional development such as seminars and workshops as well as attending conferences in teaching and assessment help to improve their assessment beliefs and competencies, as well as their use of desirable classroom assessment practices (Sanga, 2016; Koloji-Keaikitse, 2017).

Most of studies have been conducted in primary and secondary schools, which had left a gap in the literature, since few studies have focused on universities, which have a different socio-cultural context. Thus, addressing the challenges facing instructors in test construction practices is of paramount importance towards improving teaching and learning processes in universities. To achieve the current study, the specific **objectives** were the following:

- I. Examine the challenges experienced by university instructors in test construction practices in Tanzanian universities.
- II. Find out the strategies that would address the challenges experienced by universities instructors in Tanzania.

METHODOLOGY

The study employed a transcendental phenomenological research design. This design was propounded by Edmund Husserl in 1931. Husserl believed that humans' lived experiences could be taken into consideration during the research methodological process. Transcendental phenomenological design focuses on consciousness from the first-person point of view; those that experience the phenomenon first-hand offer the truest meaning of it (Moustakas, 1994).

The use of this design helped the researcher to stand firm by suspending subjectivity during tools development, data collection, analysis, and reporting of the findings. The study believed that instructors play multiple roles in test construction, from designing to releasing the results, for example, coursework and university examination results.

Therefore, interviewing the instructors with lived experiences on test construction practices would bring sufficient data that might be useful in improving examination construction in Tanzanian universities. The sample size was 30 university instructors and 12 heads of department from three universities.

Purposive and convenience sampling techniques were used to obtain representations. Interviews, observations, and documentary analysis were used to gather data. Data were analysed thematically, and patterns and similarities were used during coding and interpretation. Trustworthiness was assured through credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. Ethical issues were addressed by following the necessary procedures of adhering to ethical conduct.

RESULTS

The study findings are presented in the following subsections:

(i) Challenges Experienced by University Instructors during Test Construction Practices.

a. Large Number of Students

During interviews, most of the university instructors mentioned a large class size as a major challenge affecting their test construction practices. Most of the interviewed instructors believed the current test construction activities were mostly influenced by the number of students in one programme/course.

More particularised explanations were revealed in the tendency of the university instructors to use short answer test item types and few questions to evaluate students' learning achievement. This means that most instructors were avoiding using types of test items that would require too much time to mark since they had a large number of students in one course or programme. Emphasising this notion, one of the instructors of educational courses remarked:

In one programme, I am teaching more than 800 students and another programme with more than 600 students. With this number of students, it is not easy for me to measure their understanding in different learning outcomes. It is also not easy to give them many essay questions. Rather, you give only one which makes it easy for you to mark. (Interview with Senior Lecturer 2)

During the interview with one of the heads of department and a senior lecturer, she showed her concern with regard to the effect of class size on instructor test construction practices:

I have more than 3,500 students from the first years to the third years but with only 50 instructors. This student-instructor ratio has negative implications when it comes to students' assessment and teaching. For example, due to a big load of teaching and marking, instructors don't have enough time to prepare marking schemes and do peer review or even use the Table of specifications during test construction. This has been affecting the validity and reliability of the tests constructed. (Interview with Head of Department 3)

The finding above suggests that instructors had insufficient time to follow the recommended test construction principles during test construction. This situation also forced professors to include unreliable test items. On this particular aspect, one professor (head of department) had this to say:

The number of students is a problem in this department. It has really affected even the assessment practices, and many students complain that some of the test items come only from one area of the content taught and much of the content is not covered. The nature of test items is also not friendly as instructors prefer short answer types of questions to longer ones. (Interview with Head of Department 2)

Following the findings above, it is clear that instructors were not using the table of specifications as part of their test construction practice. This finding was also supported by document review findings from the selected universities: out of 50 test items reviewed by the researcher in all the selected universities, only 18 (36%) of them covered all the content students were taught, whereas 32 (64%) covered only a small part of the content taught. This means that most instructors tended to avoid the types of test items that demanded too much time in marking due to their having a large number of students in one course/programme.

b. Inadequate Teaching and Learning Resources

Interviews also revealed that inadequate resources such as printers, photocopy machines, manpower, and other important facilities were revealed to affect university instructors' ability to construct quality test items. The findings revealed that none of the three universities had facilities to support their instructors. During interviews, one experienced instructor had this to say:

I have been in this university for 20 years now. Some years ago, we had one photocopy machine for this department. This photocopy machine was used by instructors during tests/examinations. Slowly as the number of students increased, the service was removed. Therefore, instructors have now to look for other alternatives during test construction. Imagine you have more than 650 students; which means, you have to make 650 question papers. These are only for one test in one course. This is too much to me. (Interview with Senior Lecturer2)

Sharing the same concern, another professor demonstrated the inadequacy of resources:

The nature of the test items we construct is also affected by the facilities available here. For example, in this department, only the head of department has access to the printer, computer, and photocopy machine but for administrative duties. Others don't have such privileges. So, before I think of how I will test my students, I have first to think of how much cost will I incur in the process, and this will imply the type of test items to be set. In fact, we compromise good tests due to our inability to meet the costs involved and the university's failure to offer the teaching and learning resources as is required. This is a normal practice here. (*Interview with Lecturer 3*)

This implies that instructors were sometimes forced to spend their own money to print and photocopy tests. One experienced instructor had this to say about the challenges they were facing during the test construction process:

Sometimes, it is very challenging when you are in the middle of your lesson, then you are required to prepare the test, print it yourself, make copies, and find venue for administering the test, request assistance from other colleagues for invigilation. Oh! It is a very tiresome activity that's why, sometimes; I prefer short answers or projects which may not take much of my time to administer in classroom tests. In fact, continuous assessments are very difficult to handle. (*Interview with Senior Lecturer 1*)

This shows that lack of facilities was negatively affecting the whole academic process as instructors were now forced to use test items that did not need much money and also resources, that is, large venues and invigilators.

c. Lack of Training on Test Item Preparations

Interview findings unveiled that, with the exception of education, academic fields had very few training courses on test construction for their instructors. Subsequently, most instructors complained that they had never been trained to prepare and construct test/exams items using guidelines, such as a table of specifications, types of test items, use of Bloom's taxonomy, and how to ensure they used valid and reliable assessment tools. Regarding this, one novice instructor had this to say:

The only knowledge I have regarding test construction is about types of test items. But, actually, I do not know much about what procedures I should follow. Earlier you mentioned the table of specifications, but I could not say whether I was using it or not until you helped me to have a clue. Actually, I have been using it but I was not aware of it. I think today I have learned about it from you. (*Interview with Assistant lecturer 1*)

Just to confirm this assertion, one of the lecturers had the following to say:

We do rarely have test/exam item construction orientation or seminars for instructors here in this university. We could expect to have one or two each academic year because these instructors are only subject experts, not teachers by profession. So, they only use their experience to construct test items. That is why you find they know nothing about test construction procedures or standards of good test items. (*Interview with Lecturer 2*)

Another instructor had this to say: "Many university instructors are not teachers by profession, and the few professional teachers lack on the job training on test construction" (*Interview with Lecturer 3*).

Lack of sufficient knowledge about principles and procedures of test construction was also discovered during the interviews and it was clearly observed in the following three

cases. These cases represent a majority of the instructors. When asked by the researcher to explain the principles of test construction they knew and followed, they gave the following responses:

Case 1: As I know, principles are subjective, since every person has different ways to construct a test depending on the needs of students. On my side, I would wish my students to avoid reading notes and paraphrasing what they have read, that is conceptualisation. (Interview with Assistant Lecturer 1)

Case 2: I follow the following procedures during test construction, i.e., (1) identify learning outcomes, (2) focus on course description, and (3) do topic outlines that I covered in the class. (Interview with Assistant Lecturer 3)

Case 3: I follow the following test construction principles, i.e., (1) consider topics coverage, (2) weight distribution, (3) phrases to be used in constructing the questions, (3) time allocation, (4) marks distribution against time to be used to respond to the question, and (5) construct a test that measures all levels. (Interview with Senior Lecturer 5)

The three cases show a clear lack of adequate knowledge on principles guiding test construction among interviewed university instructors. This suggests that most of the university instructors did not have sufficient training on test construction practices. Likewise, another instructor, when asked to say how he ensured that his test was valid and reliable, said:

I have learned the principles of assessment/testing from different countries and different universities. (2) In order to construct a test which is valid and reliable, I use simple language, (3) I construct tests that measure all levels of domains, (4) I construct the test based on the coverage of the topics and not out of what was taught, and (5) I give different questions that measure different levels of students' understanding. (Interview with Lecturer 6)

The assertion above shows that instructors did not have sufficient knowledge about how to ensure that their tests were valid and reliable. Many factors that affect test reliability and validity were not being taken into consideration by most of the interviewed university instructors. This indicates the need for professional training among university instructors. To support this, one senior lecturer with an education background noted:

The mistake we make is that we think everyone with high GPA is competent to teach at university. With this fallacy, universities are busy recruiting instructors with high GPA, but they forget that a GPA is not a factor for teaching or assessing students in other countries. In those countries, before an individual is employed as an instructor, apart from having high qualifications, one has to undergo professional training first, which in fact is oriented towards teaching activities. Here, in our country, universities never take that into consideration. After one has been employed, he or she can start teaching and assess students' learning. (Interview with Senior Lecturer 6)

The finding above illustrates the need to provide professional training to all university instructors upon their hiring. They have to be oriented to teaching and how to assess their students. This suggests that most university instructors did not have sufficient training on test construction practices.

d. Lack of Internal Moderation Commitment

During interviews, it was revealed by most of the heads of department (lecturers) that most of the instructors were not attending internal moderation meetings. Because of this, most of the problems observed by external moderators remained without being solved, since only a few instructors were attending the meetings. On this matter, one head of department (lecturer) shows his concern by saying:

Another challenge we are facing on recommended test construction is a lack of internal moderation commitment shown by most of the instructors. Internal moderation meeting is a platform where we discuss and learn from external moderators' comments. Failure to attend these meetings makes instructors continue making similar mistakes every year. We are not learning from external moderators' reports at all. (Interview with Head of Department 6)

The quotation above shows clearly that instructors did not benefit from the external moderators' comments because they were not attending internal moderation meetings. These meetings are a platform where external examiners comments would be discussed and shared among instructors.

(ii) Ways of Addressing Challenges Experienced by University Instructors on Test Construction Practices

Measures of overcoming challenges facing instructors when it comes to test/examination construction practices are explained herewith.

a. Increase the Number of Instructors

This suggestion was given by the majority of the instructors. It was observed that there has been an increase in the number of students in recent years, but that it is not proportional to the number of instructors available in the respective universities. In this particular regard, during interviews, one instructor noted:

With the big number of students we have now, how do you expect that I should construct the test/exam that observes all procedures? What I can do is to set an exam that is easy to mark. To address this problem, I urge the government to employ more instructors; otherwise, assessment of students' learning outcomes will not make any difference. (Interview with Professor 8)

These views from the respondent underscores the need for the government to employ more instructors to address the challenge of the insufficient number of instructors working at universities which, as a result, has been compromising the standards of education in universities when it comes to test/exam construction.

b. Increase Budget Allocated to MoEST

It was noted that some instructors were using part of their salaries to photocopy test items and sometimes buy materials that otherwise should have been purchased by the university. Regarding this issue, one of the instructors had this to say:

I sometimes feel bad and sorry for the instructors with large class sizes. This is due to the fact that they use their own money to print tests and sometimes photocopy the tests out of the university premises. This is unethical, because the tests may leak since we cannot ensure their security. Given this situation, I am of the opinion that the university should give priority to assessment conduct because it is one of the core priorities of the university. There is no way one can separate teaching from assessment. Therefore, the

budget should be increased to address inconveniences like what I have mentioned. (Interview with Senior Lecturer 7)

Another instructor with a large class size offered another suggestion to address the problem:

The university can add funds that could be used to buy supplies and other materials for tests that are not paper and pencil; e.g., projects. Therefore, my suggestion is that the university should think about allocating more funds for buying stationeries. In doing so, some of my worries would be partly resolved. (Interview with Lecturer 7)

Based on these views, one notes that there has been a shortage of funds allocated to the universities for academic matters. However, as a way of responding to what the instructors had said, the head of department from one university, during the follow-up questions, gave a clear explanation about the need to increase the budget for teaching and learning activities:

Very small consideration has been put on teaching compared to other roles, such as research, consultancy, and publications. This is due to the fact that more research and consultancies are needed to make the university go on functioning smoothly. (Interview with the Head of Department 4)

The head of the department's statement demonstrates that teaching and assessment were being compromised for the sake of research, consultancies, and publications. However, this should not be allowed to continue. Instead, there should be enough funds allocated to support and promote teaching and learning activities. Otherwise, teaching effectiveness will not materialise, and instructors will continue to experience hardships in their teaching, including test construction. Therefore, government intervention in terms of increasing budget allocations for academic matters in universities is an urgent matter.

c. Giving Incentives to Instructors with Big Teaching Loads

It was suggested by the respondents that motivating instructors with big teaching loads by giving them some monetary incentives was important. On this particular issue, it was noted that some universities were giving incentives to their instructors with big workloads although others were not doing so. Therefore, all universities should have a clear and consistent policy on how to incentivise workers, particularly instructors, to motivate them. One instructor elaborated on this issue:

I have been teaching in this university for almost five years now, but I have never received any coin as an incentive for having a big workload. Where I was teaching before, we used to have this kind of incentive. It was categorised based on the number of classes one had and the size of the class. At the end of the semester, you would receive an allowance that could add to your pocket! Again, during marking, we were given an honorarium. Therefore, there is a need for universities to consider this. (Interview with Lecturer 8)

d. Capacity-Building Training

It was observed during the interviews that there was a need to build capacity on teaching and assessment. This was suggested by most of the interviewed instructors. It was also reflected in the completed questionnaires. On this, during the interviews, one instructor had this to say:

Capacity-building training should be mandatory for all instructors who do not have educational background. There is a big difference in assessment of teaching and learning outcomes between the instructor who has educational background and the one who does not have one. However, I am not saying that instructors with educational background always construct tests/exams that are perfect! No! They do have their own problems at times, but theirs can be easily solved through a few corrections and directions given here and there. (Interview with Senior Lecturer 9)

Looking at what has been explained by interviewees, the universities need to see how they can best offer this kind of training to the instructors. These findings show the gap from one university to another and among individual instructors. However, the methods of training may be different from one university to another depending on the resources and experts available in the university.

e. Improved Infrastructure

There was a concern on improving infrastructure, specifically, the size of the class in relation to the number of students, availability of standby generators in case a shortage of power, classrooms (auditoriums and lecture halls) to be installed with projectors and other teaching and learning facilities. With regard to this, one head of department commented:

Although there have been university efforts made in building lecture rooms which can accommodate about five hundred students, the university needs to put aside some amount of money that could be used to build other lecture rooms which can accommodate more than one thousand students. If this is done, it will assist much in reducing the overcrowding of students in some venues during the administration of examinations and tests. (Interview with the Head of Department 8)

The findings expressed in the quotes above show that there is limited teaching infrastructure in the universities. Therefore, the universities should address these problems and also increase the teaching morale of their instructors. It should be noted that assessment is part and parcel of the teaching and learning processes since it acts as a central role to the teaching process. Therefore, there is no learning if there is no assessment. Universities should get more funds that could be budgeted for improving the infrastructure. This will make the university a better place for knowledge dissemination and acquisition, as it is the centre of excellence.

f. Change Instructors' Attitude toward Test/Exams Items Construction

There was a suggestion given by some heads of department and a few instructors on changing the mindsets of the instructors on test/exam item constructions. This was observed following the fact that there were some comments from external moderators and examiners on constructing the tests which cover a broad spectrum of items, including objective to essay/extended-item types.

However, it was observed that some instructors were not ready to change and accordingly work on the suggestions given by the examiners. When they were asked by the heads of department and sometimes the moderators, they would say that multiple-choice items and their related objective items were too easy for university students.

Therefore, they stuck to extended items, and when their final results were cross-examined, big discrepancies among the students' results were observed. Regarding this, one of the heads of department made this suggestion:

I think instructors need to change their attitudes towards test/exam item constructions. This is because all students need to be given an equal chance to demonstrate their levels of understanding. However, constructing the tests that lie in one category denies students the opportunity to show their abilities. (Interview with Head of Department 10)

The findings expressed in the above quotation indicate that there is a serious problem in test/examination setting. This was observed by the researcher when reviewing test/exam papers in some courses. One instructor said the following to reinforce this finding:

I don't see any reason as to why I should set objective questions, such as multiple choice and matching items in my course. The nature of my course does not encourage those types of questions. Rather, it needs solid and very hard questions to get to know the student who is serious with studies or who came here to joke. (Interview with Lecturer 4)

Therefore, instructors need to be aware of the varieties of test items. This awareness could be acquired through a hands-on workshop. Instructors should give students the benefit of the doubt and include questions with mixed items, from objective to subjective kinds of test items as students have different learning abilities and needs. Therefore, constructing examinations that cut across a variety of items indicates fairness among the students and allows them to show their potentialities. In such a situation, there is a great chance of students to meet their needs and feel more secure.

g. Provision of Policy Guideline

Instructors suggested that, since the Tanzania Commission for Universities (TCU) has the mandate to monitor and evaluate the implementation of teaching across the universities across the country, it should therefore prepare and give policy guidelines to the universities that require instructors without teaching profession to attend a teaching course. This suggestion was made due to the fact that some instructors were observed to have limited teaching and assessment skills.

During my classroom observation, I noted some differences among instructors: some instructors were good at teaching, but a review of their tests and examinations by internal and external moderators showed that a lot was left to be desired. On this need for a policy guideline, one instructor with teaching profession background had this to say:

You know that there is neither mandatory training nor policy guideline that can force instructors to attend the teaching course prior to being hired. Given this situation, every individual is teaching according to his/her experience. This teaching behaviour may sometimes accelerate teaching ineffectiveness. However, if TCU could make deliberate efforts to prepare the policy guideline, I think there would be an improvement in terms of teaching and assessment. (Interview with Senior Lecturer 1)

In addition to that, one instructor without teaching profession showed how important it was for TCU to prepare a policy guideline:

We need the policy to make sure that every individual who teaches in the university has teaching and assessment skills. Such policy should be prepared by the TCU in order to create harmonisation of knowledge among university instructors. Otherwise, if each university is left on its own, as is the case now, despite the fact we are offering the same knowledge to our students, we may create knowledge discrepancies among them. (Interview with Lecturer 3)

Based on the findings of this paper, it is clear that each university has its own way of providing professional development to its instructors. However, the modes of training on teaching and assessment have to be cross-examined by TCU, which may then come up with a policy document that can show necessity for instructors to undergo training prior to and after hiring.

DISCUSSION

This discussion section explains both the challenges and strategies of test construction practices by referring to other previous scholars.

Enrolment rates in relation to teaching and learning resources. The findings obtained from the current study on enrolment rates are in agreement with previous studies (Yeni et al., 2016; Adu & Orivel, 2006; Effah, 2005; Teferra & Altbach, 2004; Chevaillier, 2000). These studies observed that the situation in most African countries is particularly grave. Effah (2005) gave the example of Ghana, where a university built for 3,000 students was at the time of the study coping with about 24,000 students without corresponding expansion in academic and physical facilities, thus overstressing the existing facilities to their maximum elastic limits.

Giving another example, Obanya (2004) cites the University of Yaoundé, Cameroun, which in 1993–94 had over 40,000 students on a campus originally intended for 5,000 students. Furthermore, Galabawa and Narman (2004) commented that a shortage of classroom buildings and laboratory rooms for practical activities creates overcrowding and diminishes the quality and quantity of teaching and learning process with serious implications for attainment of goals.

Staff development programmes. This finding corroborates other studies, such as Oruonye, Ojeh, and Ahmed (2018), Rubeba and William, (2017), and Ozurumba and Amasuomo (2015), which found that most state-owned universities were not adequately following staff development programmes.

An academic staff could not live up to their expectations because of the inability of the government and university administration to supply them with in-service training and current practices in their fields. Writing on the importance of professional development for university academic staff, Okeke (2000) states clearly that the opportunity for staff development through conferences is imperative and has become noticeable with the challenging development in the society with the rapid rate of technological changes.

The training received by workers a few years ago is likely inadequate to meet the challenges of today's school system. Hence, according to scientist, the academic staff ought to regularly attend conferences and seminars to update their knowledge and expand their capacity to develop skills and knowledge needed to meet new challenges.

Above all, non-attendance at conferences often resulted in a high rate of staff attrition, mediocrity, and stagnation of staff growth and development.

Moderation activities. Writing on the importance of moderation, Handa (2018) and Nutal (2007) view moderation as a process of ensuring that grades awarded are fair and reliable and that the marking criteria are consistent. In the same line of argument, Bloom says that moderation ensures that instructors are in a consistent, accurate and well-designed manner.

This suggests that moderation of assessment is the process of ensuring quality standards. Similarly, Bloxham et al. (2016) emphasise that moderation is a first-class warranty system that plays an important position in the coaching, learning, and assessment cycle in higher education. Instructors should make sure all tests are effectively moderated in order to maintain fairness and provide justice to students with varying needs.

Changing the mindset towards test construction items. According to Egger and Merkt (2016), mindsets are beliefs about oneself and people who believe themselves to act in a different way though they are in the same environment. Therefore, instructors have to change their attitudes and embrace new reforms and ideas to make their teaching and testing more effective.

CONCLUSION

Based on these findings, the study concludes that university instructors were facing several challenges, including a large number of students, lack of manpower/instructors, lack of resources, lack of training on test construction, lack of internal moderation commitment, and a large teaching load.

In order to address these challenges, this study therefore proposes that mandatory workshops and seminars be conducted for instructors who did not go through teacher education. This study was conducted in only three public universities, thus, more detailed studies to include private universities as well are recommended. Likewise, an intervention study may be conducted to improve test construction practices among university instructors in Tanzania.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

There is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:**ВИРІШЕННЯ ПРОБЛЕМ ВИКЛАДАЧАМИ УНІВЕРСИТЕТІВ У ПРАКТИЦІ РОЗРОБКИ ТЕСТІВ У ТАНЗАНІЇ**

Мета цього дослідження полягала в тому, щоб вивчити, як викладачі впроваджують тести у процес викладання, і вирішити проблеми, які постають перед ними під час тестування на практиці.

Методологія. Було задіяно три університети. Дослідження базувалося на трансцендентному феноменологічному дизайні – життєвому досвіді опитуваних, воно зосереджено на свідомості поглядів опитуваного. Цілеспрямована вибірка була використана для отримання поглядів 48 провідних викладачів. Для збору даних одночасно використовувалися інтерв'ю, спостереження та аналіз документів. Дані проаналізовано тематично. Були розглянуті етичні питання.

Результати. Аналіз виявив, що викладачі університетів зіткнулися з кількома проблемами, зокрема: великою кількістю студентів, браком робочої сили/викладачів, браком ресурсів, відсутністю підготовки щодо

побудови тестів, відсутністю внутрішніх помірних зобов'язань та великим навчальним навантаженням.

Дослідження дійшло **висновку**, що оцінювання має життєво важливе значення для покращення процесу викладання та навчання, тому, визначаючи його якість, слід вирішити низку питань, таких як обов'язкові семінари та тренінги для викладачів, які не мають педагогічної освіти. Університети мають забезпечити достатньо соціальних і матеріальних ресурсів для посилення оцінювання з метою покращення викладання та навчання.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: тест, практики створення тестів, викладачі університетів, викладання та навчання, оцінювання.

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INTEGRATION MEASURES IN COMMUNITIES AS A WAY TO NATIONAL UNITY, COHESION AND ENSURING THE NATIONAL COUNTRY INTERESTS

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**Iryna TRUBAVINA¹, Oleksandr CHEREDNYCHENKO²,
& Nadiia OLIINYK³**



¹ Doctor of Sciences (Pedagogy), Ph.D. in Pedagogy, Full Professor, Associate Professor, Luhansk Taras Shevchenko National University, Koval St., 3, Poltava, Ukraine.

✉ E-Mail: trubavina@gmail.com

ORCID <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1057-430X>



² Ph.D. in Economics, Professor, Associate Professor, Yaroslav Mudryi National Law University, Pushkinska Str., 77, Kharkiv, Ukraine.

✉ E-Mail: Ch.a.u@ukr.net

ORCID <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5304-5662>



³ Ph.D. in Pedagogy, Associate Professor, I. Horbachevsky Ternopil National Medical University of Ministry of Health of Ukraine, Maidan Voli, 1, Ternopil, Ukraine.

✉ E-Mail: oliinyk@tdmu.edu.ua

ORCID <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7770-7176>

ABSTRACT

*The article is devoted to the issue of national patriotism education in the conditions of war as a new form of social work and education for children and adults in communities. This new form is in demand in practice, with donors, but there is no theoretical justification and methodological support for it. The **purpose** of the article is to define a more structured, scientifically based*

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concept of integration of internally displaced persons in social work in various state and non-state institutions, communities, definition of its logic, forms, types, requirements and recommendations to implementation.

*The research **methods** are theoretical analysis of sources, generalization of experience, induction, deduction, synthesis, observation, comparison and analysis of situations. Research methodology make up the approaches of different levels as well: philosophical, general scientific, specific scientific approaches, scientific approaches within individual sciences.*

The scientific novelty of the article is defining the integration measures as a new form of national-patriotic education for adults and children in the conditions of war, the method of their implementation in communities, their features as a form of educational organization and a social form work at the same time. The practical significance lies in determining the stages and recommendations for the methodology of carrying out integration activities.

*The **results** of the research are justification of the purpose, principles, content, methods and forms of integration activities, requirements for carrying them out. The prospects for further research are the generalization of experience conducting such events in Ukraine, and identifying their impact on integration of internally displaced persons in new communities.*

*The **conclusion** is that the integration of people with various signs of vulnerability in Ukraine in conditions of mass resettlement and large-scale aggression is absolutely necessary.*

KEYWORDS: *Integration Measures, Social Cohesion, National Unity, Ukraine Centrism, Human Centrism.*

INTRODUCTION

The cohesion and unity of Ukraine throughout the period of independence were debatable issues and were used by various political parties to achieve their own political and economic interests. Thus, for quite a long period, these concepts did not so much unite as divide Ukrainians, and they passed from the category of objective factors to subjective ones. The concepts although manipulated by politicians, were necessary conditions for the improvement of the socio-economic situation of citizens. The extent of cohesion and unity has been directly impacted by large-scale Russian aggression.

Cohesion and unity are integral to the country's national interests, efforts to preserve the nation, and ensuring the life, rights and freedoms of every Ukrainian. Without real cohesion, there is no community serving as the basis of the administrative structure of the Ukrainian state, the main link of civil society. When there is no cohesion, then there is space and opportunity for propaganda, psychological operations (PSYOP), the incitement of conflicts, enmity, quarrels, discord, and other factors that divide the country and communities, all of which serve the enemy, and reduce the country's defense capability.

Given that we are all individuals with different life experiences, education, material levels, traumatic experiences, etcetera, in the conditions of war, having a common goal (idea) that unites citizens is important. One of the directions of such an association is the

integration of citizens by conducting social, informative and legal work in the community instead of political manipulation. It acquires special relevance in war conditions and is necessary for strengthening the unity of people and mutual assistance, pooling community resources, reducing social tension in communities and society, overcoming stress, joint satisfaction of people's basic needs, and resolution of their urgent problems.

Today, studies record a decrease in the material standard of living of people, the quality of their life, in the majority of the population there is a violation of the usual life, mental health disorder due to stress, wars, displacement, hostilities, loss of housing, work, family members, etcetera. We observe social maladjustment of people in new living conditions, significant psychological problems, psychological injuries, adaptation disorders, etc. These problems can largely be solved in the community through the provision of assistance to those most in need.

Connecting, first of all, the most vulnerable categories of people at the community level, it is important to provide targeted social assistance, both materials, in-kind, and psychological, socio-pedagogical. It is necessary to restore hope to them, to give them the opportunity to return to work for the benefit of the country, the community and for self-sufficiency.

Therefore, work needs to be undertaken within communities to address the issue integration of people made vulnerable as a result of the war, in particular internally displaced persons (IDPs), seeking to unite people around the concept of a national idea. For this, specialists are needed who know how to work with IDPs who have been displaced as a result of hostilities or occupation of the territories of their permanent residence. As at the time of writing, there are approximately 5 million IDPs in Ukraine (7). Most of them have lost property, relatives and loved ones. They left in order to remain Ukrainians, although they could have either stayed in the occupied territories or gone to the EU and lost their identity.

That is, they chose life in Ukraine, that is why they need help in integrating in a new environment. Over time, they will begin to adapt to new conditions. Therefore, the process of integration is an important next step in the lives of these individuals as they endeavour to become full-fledged new members of the community, working for its benefit and development. Thus, we consider the idea of integration as a national idea - an independent, united, Ukraine in a specific community.

The opportunity to do this exists precisely because of the provision of various social services (legal, economic, psychological, socio-pedagogical, etcetera) in the community by state institutions, public organizations (POs), charitable funds (ChFs), and local self-government bodies. Therefore, there is a need for a more in-depth study of the essence of integration processes in social work for IDPs and other categories of Ukrainian citizens who have suffered from the consequences of the war. We understand social work as social conditions for the realization of human rights, as guarantees of the state in the community through social services for the realization of these rights and solving people's problems (8), in particular, in conditions of martial law, which are in difficult life circumstances.

Today, there is a draft Strategy for the Adaptation and Integration of IDPs in Ukraine, which provides for **5 goals**:

1. State response to the challenges of internal displacement.
2. Safe evacuation of citizens from dangerous areas and meeting their humanitarian needs.
3. Adaptation of IDPs at their new place of residence.
4. Integration and development of IDPs in host territorial communities.
5. Support for safe return to the abandoned place of residence and reintegration (10).

However, the technology and methods of their implementation are absent, as in previous strategies (12, 13). The authors try to determine the integration of IDPs and other categories of people affected by the war as an actual problem of social work in modern conditions (9, 2, 3, 5), including a review of donor projects in Ukraine, charity and public organizations, as the need of therapists to solve the problems of people who definitely need it (11).

These are the projects of UNHCR, USAID, UNICEF, local public organizations, etc. Today, many organizations in Ukraine seek to address this problem in their own way, both at the level of communities, regions, and the country. Integration measures are understood as holidays, group information and counselling of people in combination with an individual approach, provision of humanitarian aid to motivate people's participation, etc. (6) That is, there is no clear understanding and interpretation of integration measures in social work, as well as a standard for their implementation in Ukraine. There are also no methodological principles for their implementation.

At the same time, the forms of their provision can also differ and can be implemented in the traditional form, both through a network of state or communal institutions, and by introducing new forms, for example, the work of mobile teams, volunteering, etc. Each organization prescribes its own standard operating procedures for the provision of such services, based on its budget and capabilities, availability of personnel, etc.

But they do not have a single understanding of the essence and principles of integration of IDPs through social work and social services. International social standards for providing assistance to the civilian population are used, which do not correlate to Ukrainian legislation, which creates diversity in the understanding of the concepts of case management, integration measures, and people with reduced mobility, etc. (1).

There are also many categories of people that these organizations care for, depending on the resources and budget: IDPs, elderly people, disabled people, other people who show signs of vulnerability, for example, families of the dead, military personnel, representatives of national and religious minorities, refugees from other countries, stateless persons, HIV-infected, chronically ill, veterans and their families, discharged servicemen and their family members, wounded civilians, traumatized children, children of war, widows, orphans, etc.

Assistance is needed by many, and for this reason unity of approach and resources is important. This can be achieved, through social work at the community level, which is aimed at the provision of help and support, help and the promotion of self-help, depending on the condition of people and the satisfaction of their basic needs. Historically in Ukraine, social work was not used as a resource for solving the social

problems of the majority of the population, only in relation to certain categories of the population that had problems of socialization.

Under the current conditions, everyone requires a degree of socialization because they were not taught how to live and work, maintain relationships and family, build life plans and prospects, etc. in war conditions. We believe that today the preservation of the lives of Ukrainians, the satisfaction of their basic needs, their unity and mutual assistance correspond to the national interests of the state. Therefore, there is a question of a single definition of the concept of integration in social work as a direction in ensuring national security in the conditions of martial law (15).

Existing studies reveal integration in the context of combating discrimination and segregation of certain categories of people, social integration as a methodological basis for inclusive education, rehabilitation of certain categories of the population that need rehabilitation, creation of conditions for living in new IDP communities, return of veterans to society after the end of the war. That research, however, does not single out integration as a field of activity of a social worker in the context of a state of war. (11, 14, 9).

Nevertheless, foreign social services do promote integration and adaptation of veterans to peaceful life after hostilities, social work with families of servicemen in the Ministries of Defense (USA, Germany, Great Britain), with migrants (France, Germany, etc.). In Ukraine, the tasks and content of the integration of vulnerable categories are not clearly defined and substantiated, there is no general vision of it as a direction of social work and social services, which fully applies to integration measures as a form of such work.

Therefore, the **purpose** of the article is to define a more structured, scientifically based concept of integration of IDPs in social work in various state and non-state institutions, communities, to define its logic, forms, types, requirements and recommendations for its implementation.

METHODOLOGY

Research methods and methodology. We chose the following scientific approaches to research:

– Philosophical approaches:

1. humanistic, which gives us a goal – human centrism, respect for people and their rights; the theory of human rights - in order to create conditions for maximum implementation and respect for people's rights in conditions of war, satisfaction of their basic needs, when the implementation of human rights and community resources are limited;
2. pragmatic: preserving the unity of the country, ensuring national interests, community development, resolving human problems, all of which ensures the principle of Ukrainian centrism– that which is good for the people is good for the country. So, guaranteeing human rights ensures the best conditions for Ukrainians, their communities and the independence of their country.

– General scientific approaches:

1. The informational approach as a means of solving people's problems, exposing disinformation, national education, and building trust in authorities.

2. The approach of exposing hatred and enmity for better grouping of the population of communities based on the understanding of a common enemy for all territories of Ukraine.
 3. Active, which involves all stages of education from words to their application by a person in activities and self-education based on habits.
 4. Axiological, which speaks of the need for both European and national values in every action and word of people, the need for national education.
 5. Humanitarian approach – assistance in meeting the basic needs of people for better integration; the main principles of its implementation are humanity, dispassion, neutrality, independence.
 6. The theory of development – explains that, even in the conditions of martial law, one should not just wait for victory, but approach it and change oneself, with the individual daily solving new problems for the sake of him or herself and the development of the country. Examples could include learning to master new professions, assume new professional functions in the war, to contribute to self-sustainability, etc.
 7. Systematic approach to activities to consistently meet needs, solve problems, coordinate interests, prevent and resolve conflicts. A system of integration measures is needed that spans the identification of needs, problems, conflicts and their causes, selection of clients and their motivation to participate in events, social advertising, measures taking into account security issues in martial law, organization of integration work to its implementation and analysis of results, their correction.
- Specific scientific approaches:
1. psychological, which explains how external influences and the struggle of motives are reflected in a person's consciousness; psychological features of perception of environmental influences, behaviour, etc.
 2. legal, which explains how to implement the goal of integration in practice within the limits of current legislation, respect human rights and how to protect them for better integration of certain categories of the population.
 3. social psychology regarding the mechanisms and ways of integration;
 4. social work as an opportunity for the realization of human rights by the individual for their better integration;
 5. an economic approach to meeting the basic needs of a person and ensuring a dignified life for the individual and their family members;
 6. an artistic approach to meeting people's spiritual needs and influencing people's emotions through art that saves the world and unites people;
 7. medical approach for the identification and treatment of psychosomatic problems, somatic diseases that escalate in war and affect the mental health, psycho-emotional state of people, their quality of life and life itself;
- Scientific approaches within individual sciences:
1. person-oriented in pedagogy as a technology of education,

2. recovery strategy in social work in the conditions of war as a direction of efforts,
3. ecological strategy of social work as a precaution not to harm in wartime with one's intervention,
4. social pedagogy regarding social education of the population in the direction of integration,
5. national education in pedagogy as a tool for shaping the consciousness and behaviour of children and youth,
6. concepts of "help for self-help" and "crisis intervention" in social work,
7. family-centric approach in social pedagogy for systematic work with families,
8. social approach in inclusive pedagogy for the integration of certain categories of the population,
9. management of social services for the organization of social work in the direction of integration according to plans, standards, etc.,
10. risk-oriented approach to determine dangers and risks in a certain area (4, 16).

All of the above provides the purpose, principles, content, forms, and methods of social work for the integration of IDPs in wartime in accordance with the specified scientific approaches.

We chose the following methods for this research: theoretical analysis of sources, generalization of experience, induction, deduction, synthesis, observation, comparison and analysis of situations.

RESULTS

Integration as a scientific concept has been studied by sociology, psychology, political science, informatics, economics, social work, etc. Integration is defined as combination, cohesion, addition, merger, association of independent people, organizations to work, live together, etc. Accordingly, integration by means of social work and social services means, in terms of content, the gathering of people of a certain territory (village, community, region, country) so that they all live conflict-free in this area and solve their problems, develop themselves and the community. Therefore, there is a problem of harmonizing and satisfying legitimate interests, solving problems, conflicts, meeting the needs of socialization and development of a person, family, community, and territory. Integration is the opposite of segregation, discrimination, exploitation, etc.

Regarding social work as a professional activity for the integration of people into a new community. This is, first of all, an activity, therefore it must have a purpose, content, conditions of implementation, and a result. Integration in social work in the conditions of war is a separate direction of its content, which is aimed at uniting people on the basis of Ukrainian-centrism and human-centrism, harmonizing their legitimate interests, meeting not only basic, but also spiritual and social needs, and needs for self-realization.

The goal of integration in social work is the maximum realization of people's rights, freedoms and interests, creating social conditions for this under the conditions of martial law for those who have difficulties with this in new conditions (war, displacement, other factors of vulnerability). Integration is aimed at the development of a person, family,

community, territory, at the successful socialization of children and adults, and at the prevention and elimination of those factors that prevent this: negative phenomena in the environment (alcoholism, drug addiction, smoking, etc.), gender-based violence, human trafficking, exploitation, discrimination, segregation of certain categories of the population. The only cathedral community in which everyone lives well, there are no conflicts is the result of integration.

Therefore, integration is aimed at national unity and social cohesion, whatever differences people may have. Integration, in contrast to adaptation, is aimed at development in new conditions, already without psychological trauma, when the problems of everyday life, basic needs have been solved, social ties have appeared and a person does not have adaptation disorders. If support is needed in adaptation, then integration requires a focus on human development to live under new conditions.

So, these are social services and social work, which does not involve supporting people permanently and treating the recipients of social services as an object, it is treating them as a subject and teaching the subjectivity of one's own life, setting life perspectives, creation of life in new conditions, etc. Integration is already a manifestation of the subjectivity of people in their lives, which is possible through help and self-help as a complex of social services.

Thus, we formulate that the goal of integration of IDPs and other vulnerable persons by means of social work and social services is: ensuring social cohesion and national unity of the community, conflict-free coordination of interests and satisfaction of all needs, creation of social conditions for the realization of rights, prevention of violations of the rights of vulnerable categories of the population.

Integration as a direction of professional activity of social workers consists of separate actions that can be expressed in different forms. Since the activity consists of actions and techniques, integration is a system of measures as a separate, time-fixed action, each of the measures has its own specific goal and task for a certain time, related in content to other measures in the integration system and implemented in a certain sequence, consists of smaller elements – individual social services of social work specialists (basic or specialized, etc.).

Therefore, we can talk about planning a system of integration activities for a certain period of time, which may be long-term and will consist of the work of a multidisciplinary team of specialists. Integration measures may include: information, counselling, transport services and other appropriate services for people in the host community. The integration measure for IDPs in social work, according to our understanding, is a form of interconnected actions of community residents, IDPs and social workers, determined in a certain period of time, in a certain territory, which is aimed at the social cohesion of the community, national unity and satisfaction of people's needs, solving their problems, coordinating legitimate interests in the community, realizing rights, preventing negative phenomena and violations of the rights of IDPs and members of the host community, development of people and the community.

Since social work on integration is a response to the needs of certain categories of the population, communities with certain difficulties, its content and form depend on those needs, the characteristics of the categories, as well as upon the ability to identify them and select adequate services for their satisfaction. Today, there are many people with

various signs of vulnerability who may live and need social services in the community: widows, the poor, the disabled, single elderly people, orphans, large families, IDPs, veterans, etc.

The methods of assessing the needs of the community and those in difficult life circumstances (DLC) currently exist and have been implemented. All of them in the conditions of war should be human-centric and Ukrainian-centric (oriented to help people and in the interests of an independent Ukraine).

An integration event for persons in DLC in social work is a form of interconnected actions of community residents, recipients of social services and social workers, determined in a certain period of time, in a certain territory, which is aimed at social cohesion of the community, national unity and satisfaction of people's needs, solution of their problems, coordination of legitimate interests in the community, realization of rights, prevention of negative phenomena and violations of the rights of persons in the DLC and members of the host community, development of people and the community. Integration measures as a new form of social work in Ukraine can be mass, group, individual, field and stationary, mediated, direct, permanent and periodic. It all depends on needs, problems and resources.

Integration measures in general by purpose and possible content should be aimed at:

- prevention and overcoming of conflicts in the community and family, prevention of gender-based violence, negative phenomena in the environment, segregation, discrimination, rights violations, exploitation, etc.;
- nationally oriented social education of the population, cultural and educational work with the population regarding the traditions, history, culture of the community, region, and country;
- creation of conditions for comprehensive development of adults and children, their successful socialization, satisfaction of spiritual and social needs, needs for self-realization, learning to own one's condition in various conditions, worry about one's mental health, develop one's life prospects, etc.;
- learning to use one's rights, self-help, satisfaction of one's own needs and interests, without violating the rights of other people.

Thus, if adaptation requires support in satisfying basic needs and getting out of the state of objectivity, then integration requires a focus on the development of a person to live in new conditions through the development of his subjectivity. So, these are social services and social work that does not involve supporting people as a permanent help, teaching the subjectivity of one's own life, setting life perspectives, living life in new conditions, etc.

Today, it is possible to formulate requirements for the implementation of integration measures, based on scientific approaches and tasks of social cohesion, unity, national interests of the country, and human rights:

- combination of an emotional component with a rational one in its perception by the population;
- use of cultural and artistic events to unite people;

- application of national-patriotic education as a basis for working with the population, national symbols, regardless of the organization holding the event, involvement of government representatives in the event;
- informing the population about the possibilities of solving problems and what is happening in the community to solve them;
- the attitude of social workers towards the population in integration as subjects of their own lives and subjects of the community, the country;
- systematic multidisciplinary field work with the population of social work specialists to solve problems and meet needs, bringing social services closer to people;
- a person-oriented approach and an individual approach to the population in the provision of social services;
- people from different categories of the population should be at the event, children and adults can be at the same time, only children of IDPs and local people, etc.;
- involving representatives of local self-government bodies to participate in the event;
- preliminary monitoring of the needs of the community and IDPs regarding filling the event with activities that correspond to them;
- combination of various forms of events and communication to meet needs, determining the effectiveness of integration measures.

There are separate requirements for carrying out integration measures depending on the level of dangers and risks as a result of hostilities. In Ukraine, there is a zone of hostilities, a zone of possible hostilities, which requires differences in the approach to the requirements for the number of participants, shelters and facilities, activities of the service sector, and, as a result, restrictive measures for the safety of people, etc.

It is determined by local authorities and approved by a government decree, which is a legal act that is mandatory for the management of all subjects, individuals and legal entities. A clear example of this approach is the construction of underground schools in Kharkiv region, the use of the subway for mass events and activities of the subway school. Implementation of a comprehensive approach in the region (a combination of offline and online learning) regarding the functioning of higher education institutions can also be considered as integration measures among students.

There is a separate issue regarding inclusion as a basis for the social integration of certain categories of the population with special needs (SN) into society. If there is work on taking into account special educational needs (SEN) for children, there were no such recommendations for adults. There is a question about the integration of adult displaced persons from the SN, people with disabilities, children of war, creating conditions for their life in new communities, about the elderly and their assistance.

Here, for integration, the documents of international organizations regarding social standards and social work with such persons, which are implemented by international humanitarian organizations working in Ukraine, taking into account the danger, are useful. So, they implement the social service "care at home", transport social services, physical support of a person to solve his problems of life in the community, representation of the interests of such people, etc.

It is possible, taking into account the above, to formulate recommendations for the implementation of integration measures:

1. An integration event is conducted for a certain category of people who need it, with community residents who have opposite interests or are indifferent to the problems of this category of people.
2. The event should be of long duration (up to 5-6 hours), have no more than 20 people of defined categories, be complex to solve various problems of socialization, development, satisfaction of interests, overcoming negative factors, etc. At the same time, the participants at the event can change: each part of the event lasts for an hour to an hour and a half, and not all people are at the event all day.
3. The program of the event should be publicised in advance to interested persons, but not accessible to the majority of the population in the interest of people's safety.
4. There should be a schedule of events that is close to the place of residence of the people for whom it is organized.
5. The event should consist of:
 - the welcoming part, as a rule, emotionally saturated, motivating to participate in the event; with information on the procedure for its implementation;
 - presentations of the organization that conducts it;
 - an informational part about solving problems faced by this category of people;
 - a training part regarding certain problematic issues for learning how to solve one's problems, developing subjectivity;
 - breaks with refreshments and communication;
 - consultation part of various specialists for people according to predetermined needs;
 - a summary of the event and the delivery of humanitarian, natural, sanitary aid to people (what is available).
 - planning joint activities in the community as a continuation of the event.

It should be noted that a positive emotional component should be maintained throughout the event in various ways as a motivation to participate. The national-patriotic part should also be constantly present, even if the event is held with the participation of donors. These can be: state symbols, Ukrainian towels, embroidered clothes, household items (didukh, pottery, etc.), food, music and songs, etc.

The stages of preparation of the integration event are:

- diagnostic: what are the problems, who has them in the community, selection of categories for the event;
- preparatory: what will we conduct, when, in which premises, under what conditions, what specialists are needed and how to involve them;
- planning: preparation of the summary of the event; its participants and involved specialists;
- organization of the event: determination of the purpose of the event, social advertising of the event to the right people, motivation of people to participate, stimulation of them to the event, determination of criteria and indicators of the

effectiveness of the event, preparation of incoming and outgoing questionnaires regarding the effectiveness of the event, determination of event presenters, preparation of a mobile team, cars to trips, etc.;

- holding an event in the community for the population in accordance with the outline plan;
- summary of the event: analysis and comparison of answers in questionnaires, impressions of participants and specialists, their observations, summarization of financial results, etc., identifying what was successful, what was not, why, what to take for the future, what to abandon and why.

DISCUSSION

An analysis of the work of humanitarian organizations working both globally and in Ukraine leads to the conclusion that the large-scale aggression of the Russian Federation, a large number of the affected population, the scale of resettlement – 5 million in Ukraine and 4.1 million (7) people in the EU require new approaches to social assistance to migrants as a result of a large-scale war, the existing approaches have been tested in relation to a local conflict. It is appropriate to use, and Ukraine does use, the norms of international standards for providing assistance to families with children regarding the use of schools in wartime as centres of social assistance in the community. This happened for the first time in Ukraine in 2022.

The ideas of psychosocial support and mental health of the population found a response among Ukrainians who were not used to going to psychologists and tended to address their psychological problems through the church, friends, alcohol, sports, physical labor, etc. The idea of a safe space for women and girls is beginning to be implemented in the lives of Ukrainian women in the territories of the war zone and possible hostilities in order to preserve their psyche and return to the habits of a peaceful life due to external circumstances.

But not all norms of international social standards of helping the population in war are as effective for our country as in other countries. Refugee camps, towns for IDPs, places of temporary residence today, in fact, are a manifestation of segregation for a large number of people. As early as 2014, places of compact living and settlements for displaced persons were introduced as transit and temporary for a certain time.

None of the government officials and donors imagined that people would live there for years, because, as already noted, these towns are not adapted for permanent long-term residence. Such places hinder the integration of IDPs, because people live the life of IDPs, communicate only with the same neighbours, do not establish social ties in the community due to the lack of constant communication with local residents, if they do not work, and children study online, do not enter kindergartens teams through usual children's activities and communication. If you look at the advantages of temporary residences, it is useful for people who do not seek to integrate and want to preserve their identity in new conditions, receive humanitarian aid, survive together, helping each other.

But this means the absence of independent life, development, integration into new conditions, because many IDPs have nowhere to return. And they cannot start life with

a new sheet of paper because of fear. They want to return to their usual life and environment, which is almost impossible, because living conditions have already changed. They also do not want to make a decision about the beginning of a new life in new conditions, because they are trying to reproduce their system, their habits, everyday life, communication and traditions of their pre-war life in these new conditions.

This is evidenced by many studies on IDPs in places of temporary residence, our own observations and experience. But all this hinders the integration of people into the host communities, distances people from real life here and now. Therefore, joint activities and communication, which are at integration events, are useful from the point of view of overcoming fears and stereotypes, provide social connections and understanding.

Studies show the need for joint activities and communication between adults and children with IDPs and local residents for the integration of people. Integration centres for IDPs and the host community were even implemented as a form of such work (Berdyansk, 2017). But integration measures have appeared only now, and there are ongoing discussions about what they should be and how they should be carried out.

Our conclusions regarding the structure and principles for holding such events, their themes and requirements for them somewhat coincide with the experience of EU countries regarding the integration of migrants from Africa and the East, when there is joint communication between children and adults from migrants and locals at events on the occasion of city and country holidays, sports, cultural events, etc. But these measures in the EU do not have a national orientation for migrants, they are national for all residents of this country, aimed at tolerance and understanding, a certain acceptance and adaptation of people to each other.

Integration measures within our country should also have a national orientation, be based on national unity and cohesion, national social education of the population for the sake of victory, and in the period after the victory, in the period of the reconstruction of an independent, united Ukraine. Their theme is not only adaptation to a new community, but also the cohesion of people. And they are conducted in Ukraine, including taking into account military security requirements, and not only taking into account terrorist threats, as is the case in EU countries.

This makes it impossible to carry out mass integration events in Ukraine, which are typical for the EU today, such as the day of cities, villages, etc. It also requires a greater number of events with less coverage of people offline, greater resources of time, money, but allows for more individual communication with people and targeted help to integrate them into the new community.

But everywhere, integration measures are needed and are carried out jointly by the authorities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), religious organizations and all those who help the population of the country in establishing life in new conditions. It should be noted that the activities of non-governmental organizations of a religious orientation in Ukraine such as "Caritas", "HelpAge" and others do not have a selective focus on a certain category of believers, for example: Christians, they help everyone who needs it.

And it also works for the idea of integration rather than dividing people on religious lines. It should be noted that there is no experience of integration of IDPs into the EU community. Because they are simply not there as such. The experience of social work on

integration in these countries applies to foreign migrants, veterans to a peaceful life, etc. We note that it is important to create a unified approach to the organization of this work, namely, the implementation of this work by competent specialists in social work under the auspices of not only donors, but representatives of local self-government bodies in communities.

This provides an opportunity to “reach” a significant number of people who need help and who previously received it from departmental bodies, but with the beginning of the war lost this opportunity (for example, members of the families of military personnel who are not together, other distant families who are separated united war). This will make it possible to develop a unified approach, unified standards for the provision of social services and will help more effectively implement integration measures to all sectors of the population that need it.

We note that state social standards today are not identical to the standard operating procedures for providing social services to vulnerable categories of the population in ChFs, POs, and international humanitarian organizations and therefore differ in content and content, which creates certain problems in understanding their essence and evaluating their effectiveness.

CONCLUSIONS

Integration for people with various signs of vulnerability in Ukraine in conditions of mass resettlement and large-scale aggression is necessary and relevant. It is carried out through integration measures that implement the idea of social inclusion of persons in the DLS, are carried out as social guarantees of the realization of human rights by the state, local self-government bodies, humanitarian and charity organizations. They are implemented as social services, which are comprehensive and are provided after assessing the community's needs for them.

We have defined an integration measure in social work as a form of interconnected actions of community residents, persons in social housing and social workers, determined in a certain period of time, in a certain territory, which is aimed at the social cohesion of the community, national unity and satisfaction of people's needs, solving their problems , coordination of legitimate interests in the community, realization of rights, prevention of negative phenomena and violations of the rights of DLSs and members of the host community, development of people and the community.

Integration in Ukraine through social work is based on a complex of scientific approaches of different levels, which define the goal – social cohesion, the principles – Ukrainian-centrism and human-centrism, the content of social work – those social services that contribute to the formation of human subjectivity and its development in new living conditions , forms – integration measures in communities, methods of their implementation – those that contribute to the formation of consciousness, a new experience of behaviour.

The forms of carrying out integration activities are different, depending on the needs and interests of people, they must meet the requirements of martial law regarding the safety of people, the principles of social work, the needs of the community and people. Prospects for further research are the generalization of the experience of conducting such events in Ukraine, their impact on the integration of IDPs in new communities.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:

**ІНТЕГРАЦІЙНІ ЗАХОДИ У ГРОМАДАХ ЯК ШЛЯХ ДО НАЦІОНАЛЬНОЇ ЄДНОСТІ,
ЗГУРТОВАНOSTІ ТА ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ НАЦІОНАЛЬНИХ ІНТЕРЕСІВ КРАЇНИ**

Стаття присвячена актуальній проблемі національно-патріотичного виховання в умовах війни – новій формі соціальної роботи і виховання дітей та дорослих в громадах. Ця нова форма є важливою на практиці, у донорів, але немає її теоретичного обґрунтування та методичного забезпечення. **Метою** статті є визначення більш структурованого, науково-обґрунтованого поняття інтеграції внутрішньо-переміщених осіб (ВПО) в соціальній роботі в різних державних і недержавних інституціях, громадах, визначення її логіки, форм, видів, вимог та рекомендацій до здійснення. **Методами** дослідження є теоретичний аналіз джерел, узагальнення досвіду, індукція, дедукція, синтез, спостереження, порівняння та аналіз ситуацій. Методологію дослідження також складають підходи різного рівня: філософські, загальнонаукові, конкретно-наукові підходи, наукові підходи у межах окремих наук.

Науковою новизною статті стало визначення інтеграційних заходів як нової форми національно-патріотичного виховання в умовах війни дорослих і дітей, методика їх проведення в громадах, їх особливостей як форми організації виховання і форми соціальної роботи водночас. Практичне значення полягає у визначенні етапів і рекомендацій до методики проведення інтеграційних заходів.

Результатами дослідження стали: обґрунтування мети, принципів, змісту, методів і форм проведення інтеграційних заходів, вимоги до їх проведення. Перспективами подальших досліджень є узагальнення досвіду проведення таких заходів в Україні, виявлення їх впливу на інтеграцію ВПО в нових громадах.

Висновок: інтеграція для людей з різними ознаками вразливості в Україні в умовах масового переселення та широкомасштабної агресії вкрай необхідна.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: інтеграційні заходи, соціальна згуртованість, національна єдність, україноцентризм, людиноцентризм.

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CREATION OF A SAFE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FOR UKRAINIAN YOUTH DURING WAR CONDITIONS

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Natalia TVERDOKHLIEBOVA¹, & Nataliia YEVTUSHENKO²



¹ Ph.D., Associate Professor, Department of Occupational and Environmental Safety, National Technical University "Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute", 2 Kirpicheva St., 61002, Kharkiv, Ukraine.

✉ E-Mail: natatv@ukr.net

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3139-4308>



² Ph.D. in Technical Sciences, Associate Professor, Department of Occupational and Environmental Safety, National Technical University "Kharkiv Polytechnic Institute", 2 Kirpicheva St., 61002, Kharkiv, Ukraine.

✉ E-Mail: natalya0899@ukr.net

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0217-3450>

ABSTRACT

The migration processes in Ukraine have become especially intense in recent years. On the one hand, they are a serious challenge for the education of young people, but, on the other hand, they represent an opportunity for their development, although they require legal support and regulation.

For quite some time now, thousands of Ukrainian children and youth have had to pursue their education abroad while hostilities continue in Ukraine. The duration of the war is decisive not only for the number of Ukrainian youths abroad, but also for their ability to plan their future life. Starting life in a new country and finding one's way in a new society can be a very difficult process. Young people face new risks and challenges. They are in dire need of educational opportunities. Many people have to learn a language, identify an educational qualification, or undergo educational retraining. Some of them still need psychological help and cannot adapt and find themselves and their

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place in a new country, but they cannot return home, where active fighting continues.

The **purpose** of this article is to study the main psychological reactions to life-threatening situations that can affect the psychological well-being of children and youth under martial law in order to develop recommendations for overcoming stress in the process of adaptation to new conditions of existence in a new country and integration into a new educational environment.

The **methodology** is based on the fundamental methodological principles of the systems approach and includes the use of a complex of general scientific (comparison, classification, generalization, systematization) and empirical (observation, search, conversation, description, analysis) methods. The integrative BASIC Ph model for stress management and increasing resilience after severe stress, developed by the Israeli Scientist M. Lahad, was used as the framework through which we sought to identify appropriate stress coping resources. Various procedures were proposed too: searching for meanings, drawing, creating collages, free writing, interaction in a group as in a "safe environment", playing with sand, breathing "4-7-8".

As part of our research, the following **results** were achieved. The views of scientists regarding problematic issues that arise for Ukrainians as they seek to integrate into the system of a new country are summarized. The basic psychological reactions of a person to life-threatening situations are considered. The study summarizes the refugees' feelings of concern about their own situation and the fate of those remaining in Ukraine during the war. Recommendations, which include the use of the integrative BASIC Ph model, are proposed as means to address problem situations during training sessions with pupils and students. In so doing, we seek to ensure the effective educational integration of Ukrainian youth.

The **conclusions** suggest that in order to restore and preserve the psychological state of Ukrainian youth who have gone abroad, it is necessary to understand and determine a person's psychological reactions to life-threatening situations in the current conditions of martial law in Ukraine for the timely application of appropriate measures and techniques to overcome them, depending on the specific situation that has arisen.

KEYWORDS: Youth, Educational Integration, Language Courses, Psychological State, Extreme Stress, Stress Management, Model BASIC Ph.

INTRODUCTION

The experience of war and flight, loss of a familiar social environment, separation from family members, friends and loved ones cause psychological problems among Ukrainians who have left the country. About 67% of registered refugees are women, about 38% are children and youth. However, due to visa exemptions for Ukrainian refugees upon entry and subsequent travel to other host countries or back to Ukraine, this information is inaccurate.

In conditions of intercultural learning and international understanding, Ukrainian refugees are forced to integrate into the educational system of the countries that have accepted them. Ukrainian children and youth should receive education in other countries, regardless of the possible length of stay, and try to maintain the opportunity to realize their right to education.

The individual's ability to exercise that right, however, can be undermined by their natural reactions to life-threatening situations. Such reactions include, in particular, the following psychological phenomena:

- avoidance – under conditions of existential stress, especially when a person experiences powerlessness, he classifies stimuli from the environment as a “life-threatening situation”. Even if the individual danger to a person has already passed, each similar situation or each similar stimulus (for example, anxiety) can be subjectively perceived as a threat here and now and cause automatic reactions such as flight and fight, freezing, trembling or sweating;
- re-experiencing (intrusion) – many images and events of the war are firmly and vividly imprinted in the memory and are still experienced very close in the present time and in a safe place. This experience may involve people mentally replaying or tracking scenes from the recent past. At the same time, they feel very tired, because they cannot sleep at night, because they again experience some of their fears in the form of nightmares;
- hyperarousal – attention may currently be focused on dangers in the person's environment. The person may therefore appear tense and irritable, be easily distracted, nervous and have difficulty concentrating and will need support. Maintaining a calm and clear demeanour and making it clear that one is safe here and now can strengthen a person's subjective sense of safety.

Children and adolescents often respond to stress with physical symptoms such as headaches, abdominal pain, nausea, and eating and digestive disorders. Normally, such reactions last from several days to several weeks. However, if family members are still in mortal danger in their home country, the subjective sense of mortal danger remains in the here and now, and stress reactions cannot yet be fully processed. In this case, such reactions should be considered as appropriate attempts to cope with a threat to life.

Understanding human responses to extreme stress is of universal importance and helps understand student responses in educational contexts. Despite having new contacts, Ukrainian refugees may feel lonely because close relatives or friends remain in their home country, and the frequency and quality of social contacts in the new country are not sufficient.

The **purpose** of the article is to study the main psychological reactions to life-threatening situations that can affect the psychological well-being of children and youth under martial law in order to develop recommendations for overcoming stress in the process of adapting to new conditions of existence in a new country and integration into a new educational environment.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

People fleeing armed military conflict are usually exposed to high psychological stress. If you have to leave the country, the move is often associated with prolonged physical stress, which also has a negative impact on the physical and psychological well-being of refugees (M. Metzger et al., 2020). As a consequence, in one case this is accompanied by the mobilization of internal vital resources; in another – a decrease or even a breakdown in performance, deterioration of health, physiological and psychological stress phenomena. It depends on the individual characteristics of the organism, living conditions, awareness of current events and understanding of the degree of danger. Thus, factors that give rise to mental tension can in some cases have a positive impact on the person mobilizing it, and in others - a disorganizing, negative impact.

In general, each country's national rules apply to refugees. In every country that accepts Ukrainian refugees, there are courses for integration in the labor market, in the education system and the economy (Siegert, 2019; Siegert, 2021).

It is important for schoolchildren to visit the educational institutions of the state in which they arrived: in a new environment they meet people of their own age, see structured daily life and can take part in various educational activities. Educational offers of states that have accepted refugees from Ukraine take into account two options – early or medium-term return to Ukraine, as well as medium- and long-term integration of people into the context of the country in which they are receiving education (Cerna, 2019).

Attending language courses is a key condition for learning a language (Spörlein & Cornelia, 2019). Thanks to the language course options, there are a number of other types of courses of which Ukrainian refugees can take advantage. In particular, if they are registered as unemployed, they must necessarily participate in integration courses (often with an in-depth target level) (Brücker et al., 2023).

The level of participation in language courses may also differ depending on the intentions of Ukrainians to stay in the country. This suggests that if refugees intend to stay for a limited period of time (for example, only 1 year or until the end of the war), they are less willing to attend language courses.

In addition, it becomes clear that those who plan to stay in the country for a long time spend time with local residents more often than those who do not plan to do so. It is possible that refugees who spend a lot of time with local people feel socially integrated, meaning they are more likely to stay in their host country for a long time.

The vast majority of Ukrainian refugees, if they were employed in Ukraine, had skilled or highly skilled jobs. Acquired professional competencies are an important condition for integration into the labor market of a European state (Kosyakova & Kogan, 2022). However, it is apparent that due to fundamental differences in the education systems of Ukraine and EU countries, Ukrainian refugees often lack qualifications. Thus, the professional qualifications of Ukrainian refugees are partially devalued.

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the research aim, general scientific (comparison, classification, generalization, systematization) and empirical methods (observation, search,

conversation, description, analysis) were used. Based on these methods, we have formulated practical recommendations for ensuring appropriate conditions for preserving the psychological state of Ukrainian youth in modern conditions of living abroad.

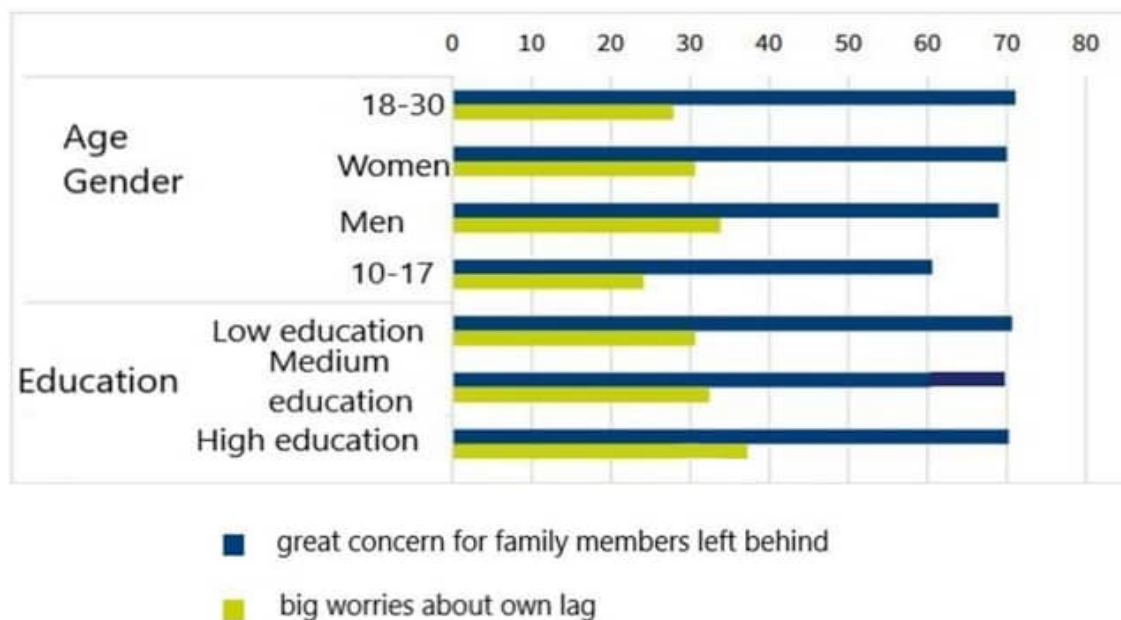
In seeking to develop a resource-oriented stress coping model, reference was made to Israeli scientist M. Lahad’s BASIC Ph (Belief, Affect, Social, Imagination, Cognition; Physiology) model for stress management and increased resilience. Research participants were offered a survey (Resource-oriented model of stress relief BASIC Ph, n.d.). In order to strengthen dominant coping resources, as well as to develop passive channels, various methods were proposed: searching for meanings, drawing, creating collages, free writing, interaction in a group as in a “safe environment”, playing with sand, breathing “4-7-8”.

RESULTS

It is necessary to take into account the special life situations of Ukrainians abroad (searching for housing, learning a language, getting an education, finding a job, medical care, etcetera). It is important in the current situation to provide special support to Ukrainian refugees, who are very concerned about their own situation in a new country, as well as the situation of loved ones who remained in Ukraine (Fig. 1). The survey involved 120 people who left the territory of Ukraine as a result of Russia’s military aggression since February 24, 2022.

Figure 1

Percentage of refugees concerned about their own situation and the fate of those who remained in Ukraine



71% of young people aged 18 to 30 said they were very worried about their loved ones who remained in Ukraine, which is 11% more than in the 10-17 age group. Perhaps this is due to the greater awareness of this category of people.

The level of education also influences the percentage of refugees' concern about the problems of Ukrainians who remained in the territory of military operations (Fig. 1).

To solve the problem of accompanying Ukrainian children and youth with psychologists and teachers, additional resources are needed. This is particularly relevant because children and youth from Ukraine increasingly will attend regular language classes and will need places in educational institutions. Extra-curricular activities such as sports or music clubs can be very beneficial in terms of facilitating the integration of children and young people.

Students may feel the need to talk about events and reactions they have experienced. Classroom discussion, led and facilitated by the instructor, can create a protected space in which uncertainty and fears can be appropriately addressed. It is advisable not to leave children and young people alone with their feelings and information, but to offer them such spaces for discussion (Kostikova & Viediarnikova, 2023).

Some children and young people may react more strongly to news of war and flight and need more support than others. It is important to emphasize that this situation is new and threatening to many people. It evokes different feelings: discomfort, anxiety, sadness, anger, pity, helplessness, fear, etcetera. The main focus of communication should be on reducing the risk of social isolation, discussing as many options as possible for overcoming stress and negative feelings of a person (Tverdokhliebova, & Yevtushenko, 2022; Tverdokhliebova, & Yevtushenko, 2023).

It is important for a specialist to determine appropriate coping mechanisms for individuals who find themselves in a stressful situation. The Lahad's integrative BASIC Ph model for stress management and increased resilience after severe stress, is suitable for this (Lahad, 2017). The survey was as followings.

Belief and values:

1. In what and in whom do you believe? What are the traditions in your life that you love and/or follow?
2. What group or community would you like to belong to (professional community, interest group, etcetera)? Which of their values are close to you?
3. What do you value in partners with whom you have a common business, work, hobby, interests, etcetera? What do you think your partners value in you?
4. What meanings fill your life?

Affect and emotion:

1. What emotions are you experiencing at a certain moment, can you name them?
2. Can you recognize other people's emotions?
3. Do you influence yourself and the people around you, taking into account their/your emotional reactions?
4. Do you share your experiences with those close to you?
5. Do you allow yourself to show your emotions? With whom do you allow them to manifest?

Socialization:

1. Do you ask for help when you need it? Do you provide help to those who need it?
2. Do you agree on the division of responsibilities in the family?
3. Do you like to communicate with others? What kind of people are they and what do you like about them? What do you get in this communication?

Imagination:

1. Do you like to create something new? In what sphere of life can you call yourself an innovator?
2. Which area for creating something new is most interesting to you?
3. Do you allocate time in your life to communicate with art, to produce something new?
4. Do you allow yourself to dream? Do you imagine your dreams and desires?

Cognition and thought:

1. Is it important for you to accurately assess the situation, collect all the information? What is "all" information for you? What risks do you include in planning when the collected information is not exhaustive? How do you check the reliability of the received information?
2. Do you analyze difficult situations in your life? Does your experience help you "not to step on the same rake"? Do you monitor progress in solving difficult life situations over time (with age)?
3. How often in your life do you train yourself, self-discipline?

Physiology and activities:

1. How do you take care of yourself?
2. Do you sleep well?
3. Can you be passionate about work, despite physical discomfort (cold, hunger, dampness, etc.)? Are you attentive to yourself and can you distinguish between physical discomfort and emotional dissatisfaction?
4. How do you alternate your activity and periods of rest?
5. What types of recreation do you like more? Do you plan a vacation in your daily life? Do you fulfil these points of the plan?
6. What types of physical activity are there in your life?
7. Are you attentive to your body in your nutrition? Do you maintain a balance between the healthy and the pleasurable in your diet?
8. Do you use relaxation techniques? Which of them do you practice?

According to M. Lahad, every person has 6 main channels, each of which helps to get out of a crisis situation (Table 1). The BASIC Ph model allows you to assess a person's condition and at the same time serves as a map for making a decision: is it enough to leave existing operating modes or do you need to connect new ones.

Table 1

Six main channels for overcoming a crisis situation

Channel	Strategy of actions
<p>B (Belief and values)</p>	<p>A person, relying on his own convictions, the desire for self-fulfilment and self-expression, finds support in faith and spiritual values that help him survive difficult times of tension and turning point</p>
<p>A (Affect and emotion)</p>	<p>This is a type of adaptation in which a person uses affective or emotional methods (communication and expression of emotions), such as journaling, crying, dancing, drawing or reading, verbally expressing one's feelings to someone.</p>
<p>S (Social)</p>	<p>A person with this type of adaptation will find support in belonging to a group (from family and friends), participation in public organizations (exchange of ideas, communication, completing tasks).</p>
<p>I (Imagination)</p>	<p>A person through his own creative thinking and imagination, for example, writing poetry, singing, participating in a theater group, visiting exhibitions, playing a musical instrument, can mask the gross facts of reality.</p>
<p>C (Cognition and thought)</p>	<p>These are cognitive strategies that involve obtaining and gathering information and knowledge, problem solving, self-direction, self-talk, or making lists of actions and preferences, such as structuring daily life, developing possible solutions to conflicts and what helps people in stressful situations.</p>
<p>Ph (Physiology and activities)</p>	<p>Physical activity, bodily methods of dealing with stress. These methods include relaxation, desensitization, exercise and physical activity in general.</p>

We can conditionally divide strategies for overcoming stress into 2 groups: already existing elements of BASIC Ph and elements that are still missing. At the primary level of work, a multidimensional approach is to consider what coping mechanisms are available to each individual. It is important to teach a person many different ways to cope with a crisis. This will help him gain the flexibility he needs to avoid getting stuck in the future and relieve stress. Alternatively, you can collect ideas for ways and strategies to overcome the crisis into separate cards and place them in a prominent place in the classroom. In this way, they will be available to each participant to visually confront numerous troubling issues.

Teachers should always take a student's unusual and disruptive positioning seriously and not judge initially, but provide fact-based comments. To avoid conflict and injury, it is important not to embarrass students, especially in front of the entire group. A one-on-one conversation may be a more appropriate interaction option. Because group dynamics can often be about preserving self-esteem or youthful oppositional attitudes, there is a greater likelihood that children and young people will be able to

show themselves to be more open to other points of view in individual conversations. It is important to agree on a stop sign in the case of direct personal attacks and accusations, as well as in the case of discriminatory, violent, extremist and degrading statements.

Let us formulate the main aspects of educational integration of young people from Ukraine:

- young people should be offered psychological support from professionals to help them cope with traumatic experiences and fears;
- refugees must be able to start their studies as quickly as possible;
- refugee students should receive educational offers that will enable them to master a foreign language as the language of instruction as quickly as possible. They should also be given the opportunity to receive education in their own language;
- it is necessary to take into account the possibility for students finishing school to study according to Ukrainian curricula;
- psychological stress after migration should be reduced. This can be facilitated by adequate housing, adequate financial support or work permits, psychological support for carers and successful social integration;
- a sufficient number of high-quality language courses should be available to adult immigrants so that they can quickly master a foreign language and find themselves in a new country.

DISCUSSION

We agree with the fact that student youth are the most vulnerable segment of society to the negative impact of social factors on psychological and physical health (OECD/European Union, 2020). However, as the war continues (Trubavina et al, 2023), the vast majority of Ukrainian refugees are still in dire need of support from the states that accepted them and, despite all the difficulties, are determined to continue on their way and try to live a normal life.

The educational level of the population in Ukraine is significantly higher than in European countries. In addition, many qualifications are available for mastering in Ukraine. Practical professional qualifications are acquired through internships at enterprises at both the secondary and higher levels of education. That is, the professional qualifications of Ukrainians are not identical to those of EU countries due to differences in education systems. But despite this, a significant part of Ukrainian refugees are employed below their level of education. Therefore, the support systems used should take into account the level of education of Ukrainian youth, their qualifications and competencies, and also be focused on their long-term stay in the country.

CONCLUSIONS

Low life satisfaction due to war, flight and family separation places a heavy burden on Ukrainian refugees. This concerns children and young people. The longer people who fled Ukraine stay in other countries, the more acute the questions about their integration into the educational process and into the local labor market become.

To restore and preserve the psychological state of Ukrainian children and youth who went abroad due to the outbreak of hostilities by the Russian Federation on the territory of Ukraine, it is necessary to understand and determine their psychological reactions to life-threatening events in the conditions of residence in the country that received them, for the timely application of appropriate measures and techniques to overcome them, depending on the current situation.

Thus, the political spheres of European states are faced with the task of creating favorable conditions in the education systems, health care and the labor market. At the same time, it is necessary to take into account the high degree of uncertainty and heterogeneity of prospects for the stay of Ukrainians in these countries.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:

СТВОРЕННЯ БЕЗПЕЧНОГО ОСВІТЬОГО СЕРЕДОВИЩА ДЛЯ УКРАЇНСЬКОЇ МОЛОДІ В УМОВАХ ВОЄННОГО СТАНУ

Міграційні процеси в Україні стали особливо інтенсивними за останні роки. З одного боку, вони є серйозним викликом для освіти молоді, але, з іншого боку, являють собою можливість для розвитку, хоча і вимагають правового забезпечення та регулювання.

Вже достатньо довгий час тисячі українських дітей і юнаків мають продовжувати навчання за кордоном, поки продовжуються воєнні дії в Україні. Фактор тривалості війни є вирішальним не лише для кількості української молоді за кордоном, а й для планування її майбутнього життя. Розпочати життя в новій країні і знайти свій шлях в новому суспільстві може бути дуже складним процесом. Молоді люди стикаються з новими для себе ризиками та проблемами. Вони гостро потребують освітніх можливостей. Багатьом доводиться вивчати мову, визнавати освітній ценз або проходити освітню перепідготовку. Деякі з них досі потребують психологічної допомоги і не можуть адаптуватися, знайти себе і своє місце в новій країні, але вони не можуть повернутися додому, де тривають активні бої.

Метою даної статті є дослідження основних психологічних реакцій на небезпечні для життя ситуації, що можуть впливати на психологічне благополуччя дітей і молоді в умовах воєнного стану для розробки рекомендацій щодо подолання стресу в процесі адаптації до нових умов існування в новій країні та інтеграції в нове освітнє середовище.

Методологія, на яку спирається ця стаття, базується на основоположних методологічних принципах системного підходу і включає використання комплексу загальнонаукових (порівняння, класифікація, узагальнення, систематизація) та емпіричних (спостереження, пошук, бесіда, опис, аналіз) методів. Спираючись на них, ми запропонували заходи для відновлення та покращення психологічного стану української молоді в сучасних умовах проживання за кордоном. Було також використано тестування для визначення домінуючих ресурсів подолання стресу, які потребують подальшого розвитку, для інтегративної моделі BASIC Ph (аббревіатура від слів – віра, вплив, соціалізація, уява, пізнання; фізіологія) для управління стресом і підвищення стійкості після важкого стресу, розробленої ізраїльським ученим М. Лахад. Для формування напрямів, менш виражених в індивідуальному стилі подолання стресу, учасникам було запропоновано опитування. Пропонувалася й така діяльність: пошук смислів, малювання, створення колажів, вільне письмо, взаємодія в групі як у «безпечному середовищі», гра з піском, дихання «4-7-8».

У рамках нашого дослідження було досягнуто наступних **результатів**. Узагальнено погляди науковців щодо проблемних питань, які постають перед українцями під час інтеграції в систему нової країни. Розглянуто основні психологічні реакції на небезпечні для життя ситуації. Пропоновано результати дослідження щодо почуття стурбованості біженцями власним становищем і долями тих, хто залишився в Україні в умовах війни. Запропоновано рекомендації щодо вирішення проблемних ситуацій в процесі навчальних занять з учнями і студентами. А також пропоновано використання інтегративної моделі BASIC Ph для підвищення стійкості після пережитого стресу, сформульовано основні аспекти освітньої інтеграції української молоді.

Висновки дозволяють стверджувати, що для відновлення та збереження психологічного стану української молоді, яка виїхала за кордон, необхідно зрозуміти і визначити психологічні реакції на небезпечні для життя ситуації в сучасних умовах воєнного стану в Україні для своєчасного застосування відповідних заходів і прийомів щодо їх подолання залежно від конкретної ситуації, яка склалася.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: молодь, освітня інтеграція, мовні курси, психологічний стан, екстремальний стрес, керування стресом, модель BASIC Ph.

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PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCE DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHING STAFF IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS UNDER MARTIAL LAW

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Mark VAINTRAUB



Doctor of Pedagogy (DSc), PhD in pedagogy, full professor, Department of Theory and Methods of Professional Training, Hryhorii Skovoroda University in Pereiaslav, Pereiaslav-Khmelnyskyi, Ukraine.

✉ E-Mail: vainmark2014@gmail.com

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2701-7094>

ABSTRACT

The **purpose** of this article is to show the problems of professional competence development of higher-education teaching staff under martial law. The relevance and necessity of developing teachers' professional competence focused on specific requirements and challenges, in particular in the conditions of martial law, is emphasized.

Methodology. In the research process, general scientific and pedagogical research methods were used, basically theoretical ones: analysis, synthesis, classification, systematization, and generalization.

Results. Among the specific components of the professional competence of teachers under conditions of martial law, the following are identified: safety of life, health, and labor protection; rules and behavior in emergency situations during war; adaptation of educational programs; ability for crisis management of the educational process and of teaching students; teaching in extraordinary conditions; moral, emotional, and psychological support of colleagues and students in stressful situations; effective use of information and digital technologies; ability to organize inclusive education with students with special educational needs; personal qualities (courage, resilience, patriotism, dedication to one's students and studies, the ability to introduce classes in conditions of instability and promote a strong spirit among students); and cooperation with the military armed forces of Ukraine, police, administration, humanitarian organizations, stakeholders, etc.

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Conclusions. *The model of professional competence development of teaching staff in higher education institutions under martial law is developed in the form of a graph. Some components of this model are reviewed. The result of the developed model will make it possible to provide higher quality and safer education in difficult conditions, in particular in the fields of professional and technological education.*

KEYWORDS: *Martial Law, Higher Education Institutions, Teaching Staff, Professional Competence.*

INTRODUCTION

The introduction of martial law in our country on February 24, 2022 in connection with the military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine will require highly qualified scientific and pedagogical staff (SPS) of higher education institutions (HEIs) capable to adapt to wartime changes effectively, to organize the educational process in non-standard situations during hostilities qualitatively, to create safe conditions for students to obtain an education. In this regard, it should be noted the extreme urgency and importance of researching the problem of professional competence development for scientific and pedagogical staff of higher education in the conditions of martial law.

The professional competence development for scientific and pedagogical staff is connected with the fact that in the conditions of war, new functions and behavior of the staff are appeared and new competencies are developed in emergency situations.

The full-scale invasion of the Russian Federation against Ukraine led to losses. As for July 1, 2023, 10 institutional buildings of professional pre-higher education and 4 institutional buildings of higher education have been completely destroyed. The number of damaged facilities is much higher (Education and war in Ukraine (2022)).

Among the main challenges posed by the war, which must be overcome, are: overcoming the increased anxiety of participants in the educational process; adjustment of the emotional and psychological state of participants in the educational process; lack of technical capabilities; departure of some students and teachers outside the country or region; lack of motivation and self-discipline among students; maintaining the effectiveness of the educational process (Suslova, 2022).

Stadny & Nikolaev, etc. paid attention to the circumstances of the educational process in the conditions of martial law. In their recommendations regarding the using blended learning in institutions of professional pre-higher and higher education, it is indicated that “for the purposes of blended learning, digital literacy is the ability to use online technologies and master new ones. This is the basis for competencies development, and without mastering the competencies it is difficult to go further” (Stadny & Nikolaev, 2020, p. 16).

Among the four competences the following are offered: integration of technologies; use of data; personalization; online interaction. Integration is related to the ability to create an effective learning environment for students. The use of data combines digital tools to monitor this performance. Personalization is a teacher's competence in creating an educational environment that takes into account students' own goals, their pace and/or way of learning. Online interaction is related to effective online interaction between teachers and students and students among themselves (Stadny & Nikolaev, 2020, p. 16).

Clifford Maxwell (2016) researched blended learning, that is closely related to online learning. All blended learning programs are marked by a combination of the Internet, and increasingly from face-to-face learning to online content and instruction. No doubt, the task of a teacher is to create an educational environment in order to support educational activities that correspond to the achievement of the desired learning outcomes (Biggs, 2003).

According to the national researcher O. Budiachenko (2022), the improvement of working conditions in the conditions of martial law in Ukraine can solve the problematic issues of distance education in higher educational institutions, taking into account their advantages and disadvantages.

Another national researcher, H. Zhila (2023), analyzed the development of higher education in Ukraine, theoretically substantiated the problems and prospects of higher education, that Ukrainian science can hope for in the future. Worthy of attention is the conclusion regarding forced migration and the part reduction of the staff, doctoral students and students due to being at the frontline (Zhila, 2023).

The **purpose** of the article is to determine and evaluate the components of professional competence development for scientific and pedagogical staff in the context of higher education institutions under martial law in Ukraine.

The **methodology** is based on a review of academic literature, research process. General scientific and pedagogical research methods were used: theoretical: analysis (comparative, systemic, analytical-synthetic, inductive, deductive) to justify the above-mentioned problem; synthesis (general scientific, interdisciplinary) to justify the unity of interrelated components of the model of professional competence development for scientific and pedagogical staff of higher education institutions under martial law, formulating a conclusion.

As well as classification, systematization, generalization methods were used with the aim of substantive generalizations of theoretical material, defining conceptual positions. In this aspect, the implementation of information and digital technologies is important, in particular, the implementation of scientific and methodological complexes, websites, educational and methodological manuals for disciplines and practices, methodological recommendations for mastering educational and practical issues, etc.

The full-scale war of the Russian Federation against Ukraine in 2022 led to huge material losses, in particular for the domestic education system (at the beginning of July 2022, 184 such institutions were damaged ["Education and war in Ukraine," 2022]). The main challenges posed by the war and which must be overcome among the students and educators were investigated by N. Suslova (2022).

According to the Ukraine's law concerning higher education, one of the priority tasks, due to the martial law, is digitalization, creation of conditions for the development of innovations, effective implementation of new knowledge and technologies (On higher education, 2023). The problem of professional competence development of scientific and pedagogical workers within higher-education institutions under martial law has been addressed by many researchers.

The necessity of introducing mixed, digital education due to the inhibition of the educational process in the conditions of martial law was noted by Zhila (2023) and

Stadny & Nikolaev (2020, p. 16). Clifford Maxwell researched blended learning, which is closely related to online learning. All blended learning programs incorporate the internet (2016).

Let us emphasize that Budiachenko (2022), Vlasenko (2017), and Maphalala & Adigun (2020) investigated peculiarities in the organization of distance learning in ensuring and implementing a high-quality educational process in a crisis situation as well as accessibility and independence in acquiring the required amount and quality of knowledge.

Among foreign scientists, John Biggs should be noted, who studied “constructive agreement” for the construction of learning (2003). Among foreign researchers on improving the educational process in nonstandard conditions, Benjamin Bloom also should be noted. The framework developed by Bloom and his colleagues consists of six main categories: knowledge, understanding, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Fink created a course design model for student teaching in which the first step should be to identify important situational factors (2023).

However, the development of the professional competence of scientific and pedagogical workers in higher-education environments under conditions of martial law was not given due attention and requires a specific study.

RESULTS

The Department of Theory and Methods of Professional Training at Hryhorii Skovoroda University in Pereyaslav has used the Moodle system, during the professional training of future specialists in labor protection, secondary education, and labor training and technologies, to conduct training on methods of technological education and computer graphics. Likewise, the National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine has used Moodle, for the professional training of future specialists in the transport industry. Scientific and methodical complexes have proven themselves in Moodle.

In Moodle, lectures for disciplines and work programs are available electronically for students with the help of a password. These may include a list of independent and creative works, methodological recommendations for mastering disciplines and practices-introductory, technological, or pedagogical-educational and methodological aids, multimedia presentations, tests for self-examination and verification of the material learned, etc.

The experience of working in the conditions of martial law showed that the development of professional competence in the teaching staff (scientific and pedagogical workers [SPW]) of higher educational institutions (HEI) during the war depends on the components shown in figure 1 in the form of a model of the development of professional competence of the SPW HEIs under the conditions of martial law.

The professional competence, in particular in labor protection, technological education, the transport industry and logistics, requires adaptation, the emergence of new components of a competence in connection with the war. These components should be aimed at ensuring: the safety of colleagues and students of higher education institutions; access to training online; organization of the educational process for students; additional consultations; psychological support, etc.

It is generally accepted that higher educational institutions should constantly improve:

pedagogical skill, creative thinking, technological and information literacy, systematic thinking, lifelong learning with the assignment and/or confirmation of relevant professional qualifications in formal, informal or informal education.

During the war with the Russian Federation, the quality of professional training for specialists for the priority branches of Ukraine's economy, in particular graduates from the transport industry and logistics, labor protection, technological education, depended on professional competence development.

Specialists graduating from higher education institutions must master their specialty perfectly, that includes, according to the educational standard of higher education, the development of different competences: integral, general and special (professional, subject). These competencies are developed on the background of studying an educational discipline (a subject), technologies, methods, psychological and physiological knowledge, the use of information and digital technologies in professional pedagogical activities, etc.

During the educational process higher education institutions in the conditions of the war should contribute to providing students with skills: health and life safety, labor protection at all levels of the educational environment, effective organization during distance and mixed learning forced by the war, patriotic citizens development, development in their creativity and competences regarding behavior in emergency situations. With this in mind, higher educational institutions should set up new goals and learning outcomes in curriculums, take into account the increase in wartime entrants with special educational needs, and based on it, use appropriate technologies, methods, and means of inclusive education.

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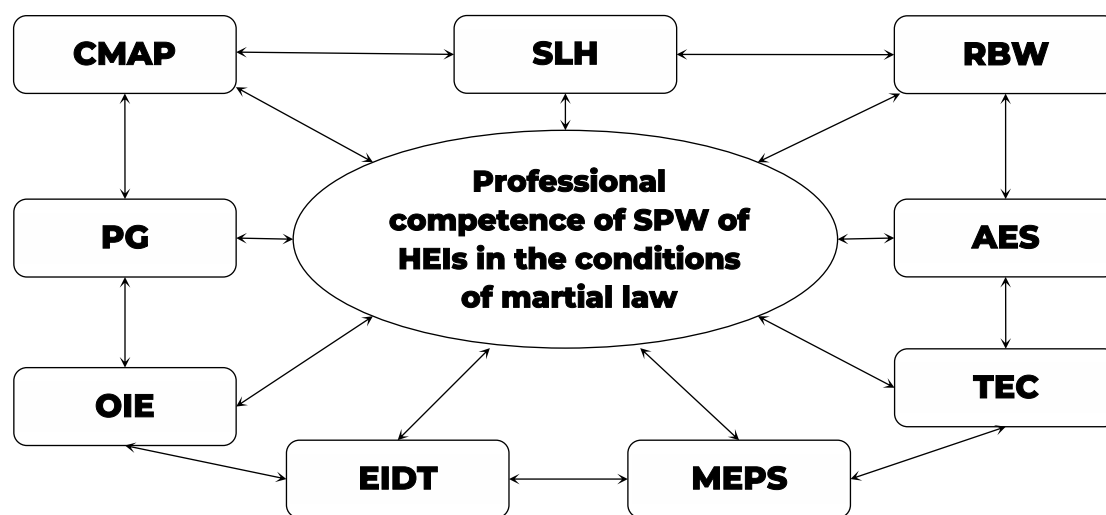
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Figure 1

Model of the professional competence development of teaching staff in higher educational institutions under martial law



On this model, SLH is the safety of life, health, labor protection. RBW are rules and behavior in emergency situations during war. AES is the ability to manage the educational process in crisis and to work with students. TEC is teaching in extraordinary conditions. MEPS is moral, emotional, and psychological support of colleagues and students in stressful situations. EIDT is effective use of information and digital technologies. OIE is the ability to organize inclusive education with students with special educational problems. PG are personal qualities (courage, resilience, patriotism, dedication to one's students and studies, the ability to introduce classes in conditions of instability and to promote a strong spirit among students). CMAP is cooperation with the military armed forces of Ukraine, police, administration, humanitarian organizations, stakeholders, and fire organization, etc.

Let's take a brief look at some of these components.

EIDT is the effective use of information and digital technologies. It is especially manifested during a state of rest, when students are forced to be outside the HEIs. Such technologies make it possible to access safe continuous learning, to ensure access through the use of appropriate platforms and tools. The author describes in detail the positive impact of these technologies on the educational process in works (Budiachenko, 2022; Vaintraub, 2021).

As the practice of work at Hryhorii Skovoroda University has shown, the advantage of distance learning in the conditions of martial law includes: effective management decisions regarding the organization of the educational process, optimization of the

process of information exchange, reducing the amount of work of the administration in the higher education system (Vaintraub, 2021).

In this regard, open online resources, internet communication services, smart-complexes of disciplines with the inclusion of digital video recording, the use of social network channels for communication, the introduction of virtual reality, the individual educational trajectory of a student have shown positive results and (Vaintraub, 2023). The author describes in detail the positive impact of these technologies on the educational process in works (Vaintraub, 2021; Vaintraub, 2023).

SLH is safety of life, health, and labor protection. The formation of SLH behavior in extraordinary situations under martial law is facilitated by the approaches described by the author to the formation of a culture of safety for professional activity (ecological, geophysical, medical-biological, algorithmic, strategic, informational, etc., external, synergistic, gender, block practice) (Vaintraub, 2023).

RBW – rules and behavior in emergency situations during the war—is considered by the author in the work (Vaintraub, 2023). Among the forms of education (face-to-face, distance) during the war, a safe-distance form of education was proven to be successful. During intramural education, air alarms, for example, slow down the educational process due to the need to stop classes and go to shelter.

DISCUSSION

In the developed model of professional competence of SPW HEIs in conditions of martial law, competences representing specific components of professional competence of teachers are defined. The result of this model makes it possible to provide higher quality and safer education in the difficult conditions of war.

In the opinion of the author, two of the main competencies that should be highlighted were safety of life, health, and labor protection alongside rules and behavior in emergency situations during war.

The next important competence is the ability to manage the educational process in a crisis and to work with students while teaching in emergency conditions. The specified component is related to overcoming the problems in Ukraine during the war, considered by Zhila (2023), and, of course, to the personal qualities of the teacher, namely: courage, patriotism, devotion to his/her students and studies, the ability to introduce classes in conditions of instability and to promote strong morale among students.

Next to this is the component of moral, emotional, and psychological support of colleagues and students in stressful situations. The author agrees with Suslova (2022) that adjusting to the emotional and psychological state of participants in the educational process is one of the most important issues of managing the educational process. It is also worth noting an important component regarding the effective use of information and digital technologies, which was studied by Budiachenko (2022), Fink (2023), Biggs (2003), and other researchers discussed above.

The ability in modern conditions, especially during the consequences of the aggressive military actions of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, to organize inclusive education for students with special educational needs or disabled as a result of hostilities is one of the priorities in our society and educational institutions. In this regard, we agree

with researchers Bloom (2010), Fink (2023), and others about the importance of improving the educational process in nonstandard conditions, predicting situational factors.

The experience of working in higher educational institutions shows that all competencies (that is, components of professional competence of scientific and pedagogical employees in higher educational institutions under martial law), depicted in the graph (figure 1), are effective if they operate in a system, interdependent with each other.

CONCLUSIONS

The relevance and necessity of developing teachers' professional competence, focused on specific requirements and challenges, in particular in the conditions of martial law, is considered.

The specific components of the professional competence of scientific and pedagogical workers in the conditions of martial law were determined. The model for the development of the professional competence of scientific and pedagogical workers in higher education institutions under the conditions of martial law was developed, and the specific components of the professional competence of teachers of the higher education institutions were determined in accordance with this model. The result of this model makes it possible to provide higher quality and safer education in the difficult conditions of war.

The proposed material will be of interest to teachers of institutions of higher education in the fields of transport and professional and technological education.

Prospects for further research in this direction are examples of the model, which foresees new components of professional training of scientific and pedagogical workers of higher education institutions under martial law.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The author declares that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:

РОЗВИТОК ПРОФЕСІЙНОЇ КОМПЕТЕНТНОСТІ НАУКОВО-ПЕДАГОГІЧНИХ ПРАЦІВНИКІВ ЗАКЛАДІВ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ В УМОВАХ ВОЄННОГО СТАНУ

Мета статті – розвиток професійної компетентності науково-педагогічних працівників закладів вищої освіти в умовах воєнного стану. Обґрунтовано актуальність і необхідність розвивати у педагогів професійну компетентність, орієнтовану на специфічні вимоги та виклики, зокрема в умовах воєнного стану.

Методологія. У процесі дослідження було використано загальнонаукові й педагогічні методи дослідження: теоретичні: аналіз, синтез, класифікація, систематизація, узагальнення.

Результати. Серед специфічних компонентів професійної компетентності педагогів в умовах воєнного стану вивчено: безпеку життя, здоров'я, охорону праці; правила і поведінку в надзвичайних ситуаціях під час війни; адаптацію навчальних програм; здатність до кризового управління освітнім процесом та виховної роботи зі студентами; викладання в надзвичайних умовах; моральну і емоційно-психологічну підтримку колег і студентів у стресових ситуаціях; ефективне використання інформаційно-цифровими технологіями; здатність організувати інклюзивне навчання зі студентами з особливими освітніми проблемами; особистісні якості (мужність, стійкість, патріотизм, відданість своїм студентам та навчанню, вміння ввести заняття в умовах нестабільності й сприяти міцному духу серед студентів); співпраця з воєнними збройних сил України, поліцією, адміністрацією, гуманітарними організаціями, стейкхолдерами, пожежною організацією тощо.

Висновок. Розроблена модель розвитку професійної компетентності науково-педагогічних працівників закладів вищої освіти в умовах воєнного стану у вигляді рисунку. Розглянуто деякі компоненти цієї моделі. Результат впровадження розробленої моделі дозволить надати більш якісну і безпечну освіту у складних умовах, зокрема у галузях професійної та технологічної освіти.

Ключові слова: воєнний стан, заклад вищої освіти, науково-педагогічний працівник, професійна компетентність.

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SOFT SKILLS AND CREATIVE ACTIVITY: ANALYSIS OF INTERCONNECTION IN THE EDUCATION OF FUTURE GRAPHIC DESIGN PROFESSIONALS

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Kateryna VITCHYNKINA

University lecturer, International Education Program at the University of Wales Trinity Saint David, United Kingdom; School of International Education, Wuhan University of Technology, China.

✉ E-Mail: vikaltd@163.comID <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2955-8158>

ABSTRACT

The **purpose** is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the correlation between soft skills and indicators of creative activity among future graphic design professionals, utilizing methods of theoretical analysis of educational standards. The relevance of this research is determined by the necessity to develop soft skills and creative activity in future professionals in graphic design within the framework of the contemporary job market.

Methodology. Theoretical methods involve a review of scientific literature to understand existing perspectives and research on soft skills and creative activity, aiming to elucidate key concepts and theories. Analysis and synthesis are employed to scrutinize educational programs, standards of People's Republic of China (PRC) and the United Kingdom (UK), and industry-specific criteria in graphic design, identifying key elements related to soft skills and creative activity.

Results. The study characterizes and clarifies that educational standards recognize the importance of cultivating "soft skills" in future graphic design professionals. It highlights the interaction and complementarity of soft skills and personality traits, which define specific knowledge and abilities and reflect distinctive characteristics and values. The research compares soft skills (communication, creativity, problem-solving, critical thinking, and time management) with specific personality traits (interest, originality,

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independence, initiative, and energy) in the context of their interrelation in the field of graphic design.

Conclusions. *Soft skills and indicators of creative activity are interconnected and mutually reinforce each other in the process of graphic design projects. Soft skills provide the foundation for the effective utilization of indicators of creative activity. It is pointed out that further research is needed to determine the levels of development of creative activity among future professionals in graphic design concerning the identified indicators.*

KEYWORDS: *China, Educational Program, Educational Standard, Great Britain, Higher Education, Personality Traits.*

INTRODUCTION

The development of soft skills and personality traits in the educational process is a key aspect of preparing future professionals in graphic design. This helps ensure their competitiveness in the job market and a successful career in the field of graphic design. In the educational process, the development of soft skills and personality traits for future professionals in graphic design takes on special significance.

Students should learn to tackle creative tasks using various approaches, experimenting with different styles and techniques. This helps foster their creativity and analytical skills. Students must be adept at collaborating effectively in a team, receiving constructive criticism, and working on their own shortcomings. This contributes to the development of communication skills and the ability to work within a team.

Soft skills and indicators of creative activity are an integral part of the personality of a graphic design professional and manifest themselves in the design process. These competences and qualities not only assist graphic design professionals in effectively performing their duties but also have an impact on the quality and success of projects. There is no defined, singular approach to determining the personal qualities a graphic design professional should possess.

The issue of defining the personality traits of a designer is highlighted by Dubberly, noting that with the development of technology, traditional design skills are no longer sufficient, and a modern designer needs to be well-versed in contemporary technologies (2011). Bazilyuk also asserts that a designer should be proficient in the fundamentals of design and shaping, be knowledgeable about cutting-edge materials and technologies, and simultaneously have an understanding of psychology and economic issues (2015).

Kunrath, Cash, and Li-Ying (2016) also point out that the development of a designer's personality has technical and human aspects. Fursa (2013) indicates that the qualities of a designer's personality are dictated by the socio-economic demands of society.

The requirements for the skills and personality of a graphic design professional are specified in state education standards, program documents of educational-professional programs, and manifestos of design councils.

In the national standards for the quality of professional education at the bachelor's level issued by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China (PRC) regarding the design specialty, it is specified that graphic design professionals should possess

creative thinking, aesthetic judgment, scientific working methods, teamwork skills, and have a broad international perspective and a keen sense of time. They should also have skills in self-expression, communication, and collaboration, as well as aesthetic abilities, basic skills in innovation and entrepreneurship, basic skills in document search, design research, data analysis, and competence in planning (Jiàoyùbù gāoděng xuéxiào, 2018).

In the program document of the national educational-professional program of the College of Arts and Design at Wuhan University of Technology, specializing in visual communication design, it is noted that students should possess basic knowledge of innovative design and communication, organizational skills, the ability to plan design activities, problem-solving skills in design projects, specific communication tools, the ability to utilize various means of self-expression, professional skills and methods in creating artistic design, aesthetic abilities, and a desire and capacity for life-long learning. They should have the ability to adapt to the development of design innovations, a strong sense of teamwork and collaboration, logical and dialectical thinking, critical awareness, and practical methods of design thinking, as well as creative consciousness. (Wǔhàn Lǐgōng Dàxué, 2017).

In the 2019 “Subject Benchmark Statement for History of Art, Architecture and Design,” developed by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education of the United Kingdom (QAA), upon which educational programs for the graphic design specialty are based, the following skills are specified and grouped as follows:

- 1) Open-mindedness: the ability to perceive new things and ideas and assess different points of view.
- 2) Autonomy: the ability to develop independent reasoning based on authoritative sources in the subject area and formulate arguments.
- 3) Information: skills to use various current and new digital technologies, demonstrating digital literacy.
- 4) Time management and personal initiative: the ability to work according to instructions and deadlines, including managing parallel projects.

In the program document of the international educational-professional programs of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David (UK) and Wuhan University of Technology (PRC), such goals as creativity, aesthetic sensitivity, intellectual exploration, teamwork skills, openness to diverse ideas, and the ability to work independently are listed. Education seekers should demonstrate self-development, individual approaches, personal organization and management; use a high level of subject-specific abilities, unconventional thinking, and creativity; synthesize ideas and aesthetic sensibilities and apply them to solve creative problems (University of Wales Trinity Saint David & Wuhan University of Technology, 2013).

In the *Design Education Manifesto* issued by the International Council of Design (Icograda, 2011), it is noted that a designer is capable of identifying and formulating problems collaboratively, exploring possibilities through critical thinking, creativity, experimentation, and evaluation. Additionally, designers easily adapt to technological changes, and willingly take on the challenge of learning and mastering new methods of visualization and communication concepts across various media, using so-called “smart materials.”

The strategy of the Design Council of the United Kingdom outlines the direction of work for the next four years, identifying key priorities in design activity. It also emphasizes the crucial importance of developing design skills in our current and future workforce. According to the definition of the Design Council of the UK, design skills involve the ability to take an idea and bring it to life. Design skills constitute a set of abilities and a unique way of thinking about a problem, combining materials to achieve function, and creating meaning that leads to new ideas. Design skills are crucial as they enable one to understand the complexity of a task, apply different solutions, develop viable solutions, create action plans, generate new ideas, collaborate, critically and creatively comprehend the design process, combine different ideas, and demonstrate originality. Among the skills applied by designers are creativity, originality, initiative, critical thinking, attention to detail, flexibility, problem-solving ability, and emotional intelligence (Design Council, 2020).

Skills have become critically important for success in the job market and for personal development. For example, the report by the World Economic Forum titled “The Future of Jobs” (2018) highlights this significance. It emphasizes that skills related to technological development, creativity, critical thinking, communication, and collaboration will be keys to a successful career in the future.

Hendarman, Cantner, and Hendarman (2017) resort to defining tangible and intangible skills, and Fan, Wei, and Zhang (2005) resort to defining cognitive and non-cognitive skills, which they also characterized as “hard” and “soft” skills (Hendarman, Cantner, & Hendarman, 2017; Fan, Wei, & Zhang, 2005; Hadiyanto, Noferdiman, Moehaimin, & Yuliusman, 2017). Soft skills are abilities that are not directly related to the technical proficiency needed for a specific job but are crucial for success in any profession.

Studies carried out by Harvard University, the Carnegie Foundation, and the Stanford Research Center have collectively determined that 85 percent of success in a job is attributed to possessing refined soft and interpersonal skills. In contrast, only 15 percent of job success is derived from technical skills and knowledge (hard skills) (National Soft Skills Association, n.d.).

As per the *Harvard Business Review*, with the advancement of automation and AI, soft skills—those qualities that machines are incapable of replicating—are gaining increased significance (Chamorro-Premuzic & Frankiewicz, 2019). And these findings aren't unique, the 2019 LinkedIn Global Talent Trends report revealed that 92 percent of talent professionals emphasized the significance of soft skills, asserting their equal or greater importance compared to hard skills in the hiring process.

Furthermore, 80 percent of respondents indicated the growing importance of these skills for overall company success (Lobosco, 2019). Based on the results of research data, it is crucial and necessary to primarily develop soft skills. Freitas and Almendra (2021), in their research on soft skills in the context of design education, identify that, among more than twenty defined skills, communicative skills, critical thinking, creativity, problem-solving abilities, and inquisitiveness are deemed the most significant by respondents from 26 countries.

In our study, we will rely on soft skills, such as communicativeness, creativity, problem-solving, critical thinking, and time management. These skills can be highlighted in the analysis of educational standards in China as well as in the United Kingdom. This study

includes academic-professional programs for graphic design professionals at the bachelor's level (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2019; University of Wales Trinity Saint David & Wuhan University of Technology, 2013; Jiàoyùbù gāoděng xuéxiào, 2018; Wǔhàn Lǐgōng Dàxué, 2017). The combination of these skills specifically helps a designer to solve design problems, as noted in the *Design Education Manifesto*, which emphasizes that a designer identifies and formulates a set of problems, solves them by combining critical thinking, creativity, experimentation, and evaluations (Icograda, 2011).

The **aim** of the article is to conduct comprehensive analysis of the correlation between soft skills and indicators of creative activity among future graphic design professionals.

METHODOLOGY

The research employs approaches based on theoretical methods. Theoretical methods include a review of scientific literature to elucidate existing perspectives and studies on the topic of soft skills and creative activity, aiming to understand key concepts and theories. Analysis and synthesis involve studying and analyzing educational programs and standards, as well as industry standards in graphic design, to identify key elements related to soft skills and creative activity.

RESULTS

Skills and personal qualities can be considered separately, yet they are often interrelated and influence each other. The connection between skills and personal qualities varies depending on the specific situation and context. Some skills may depend on certain personal qualities for their successful application, while other skills may contribute to the development of specific qualities.

For instance, in their research, Lima Rua and Maia (2023) examine the correlation between creativity and soft skills. This correlation is also indicated by Nohara, Norton, and Kawano (2017). Bohdan (2023) classifies types of soft skills based on the classification of personality qualities. In his studies related to creative intelligence, Guilford (1962) hypothesized that creative activity is dependent on accumulated skills, thus, indicating a correlation between creative activity as a personal trait and skills.

The correlation between soft skills and personality traits, which indicate a level of creative development, may be grounded in the idea that successful graphic design professionals should possess not only technical knowledge but also a set of personal qualities that contribute to their creative productivity. Soft skills concerning future graphic design professionals can correlate with personal qualities that can serve as indicators of creative activity in the following way:

1) Communicativeness–interest: communicativeness involves the ability to effectively communicate with others, while interest indicates stimulation and satisfaction from project design tasks. Communicativeness and interest are crucial aspects of the graphic design project process. Communicativeness includes not only the ability to express ideas and concepts but also the ability to listen and understand other project participants. Effective communication with clients, colleagues, and other stakeholders is important

for understanding their needs and requirements, as well as for the successful implementation of project tasks.

The ability to communicate clearly and comprehensibly contributes to reducing misunderstandings, improving collaboration, and ensuring high-quality execution of graphic design projects. The research of scholars such as Wang (2022), Rovida, Gianotti, and Zafferri (2022), and Malouf (2011) demonstrates that communicativeness significantly influences success in the field of graphic design. On the other hand, interest serves as a powerful motivator for graphic design professionals.

Engaging in projects that spark interest and stimulate creative potential can contribute to better outcomes. Interest in the design process encourages deeper exploration of the subject, experimentation with new ideas and approaches, as well as the discovery of unique and original solutions.

2) Creativity and originality: creativity involves the ability to generate new ideas and think unconventionally, while originality indicates the capacity to demonstrate innovative and creative approaches. In the graphic design process, creativity and originality are crucial elements contributing to the success and distinctiveness of a project. Creativity includes the ability to generate new ideas and approaches that can alter perspectives and create unique concepts. It allows designers to find unconventional solutions and go beyond ordinary approaches.

On the other hand, originality signifies the ability to demonstrate innovative and creative approaches in work. This means that a graphic design professional has the ability to achieve uniqueness and distinctiveness in their projects, utilizing creativity to create something new and impressive.

Creativity and originality are key factors that differentiate high-quality graphic design from the ordinary, adding a unique style, aesthetics, and emotional charge to the project. The ability to generate new ideas and apply them in the creative process helps solve problems, engage, and captivate the audience. Research confirms that creativity is one of the key soft skills defining success in graphic design, as indicated by scholars, such as Lopes, Correia, and Machado (2022) and Visser, Chandler, and Grainger (2017).

3) Problem-solving–independence: problem-solving involves the ability to analyze complex tasks and find effective solutions, contributing to independence in work. In the graphic design process, problem-solving is a crucial skill that helps designers analyze complex tasks and find effective solutions. This includes the ability to understand project requirements, identify potential issues the project might face, and develop strategies for resolving them.

The importance of problem-solving skills for future professionals in graphic design and problem-solving abilities is highlighted in the research of scholars such as Yan (2020). Problem-solving requires an analytical and critical approach to tasks. The designer must grapple with the problem, identify various possibilities and solutions, and then choose the most effective path.

This includes the ability to pinpoint key factors, conduct research, analyze data, and make informed decisions. Problem-solving also promotes independence at work. Designers should be capable of independently analyzing tasks and seeking solutions

without constant direction or supervision. This allows designers to be more autonomous and self-reliant in their work, contributing to better outcomes.

4) Critical thinking and initiative: critical thinking involves the ability to analyze, evaluate, and challenge ideas and solutions, fostering initiative in implementing new ideas and projects. Gavrysh and Dotsenko (2021) defined critical thinking as an individual ability to find effective solutions based on existing stereotypes and developed criteria.

Yin Li Ming (2021) emphasizes the importance of cultivating innovative thinking. In the process of graphic design, critical thinking is a necessary skill that helps designers analyze, evaluate, and challenge ideas and solutions. Critical thinking involves the ability to understand the project's context, consider it from various perspectives, and formulate reasoned thoughts and assessments. Critical thinking allows designers not only to accept ideas but also to analyze them for potential problems or shortcomings.

This skill contributes to the improvement and refinement of projects while preventing possible errors. A designer with the ability to think critically identifies flaws and opportunities for improvement, leading to the creation of more successful and effective solutions. Critical thinking also stimulates initiative in implementing new ideas and projects. A designer who can critically evaluate ideas and develop their own approaches brings a fresh and original perspective to the work process. They foster initiative, explore new opportunities, and make daring decisions, promoting creativity and innovation.

5) Time management and energy: time management involves the control of time and resources, which can support energy in task execution. In the process of graphic design, time management plays a crucial role in ensuring the efficiency and success of tasks. Time management includes the management of time and resources, allowing designers to effectively allocate their time, prioritize tasks, and use resources optimally.

The importance of time management is emphasized in research by scholars, such as Malouf (2011) and Zeegen (2009–2011), who note that real-world projects are accompanied by deadlines and constraints. Energy in task execution is an important characteristic of the design process. Time management helps designers preserve energy through rational planning and effective control of working hours. This helps avoid overload, stress, and exhaustion while ensuring proper focus and productivity during work.

Efficient time management also allows for the allocation of time for creative experimentation and exploration. Through thoughtful planning and organization of time, a designer can set aside periods for generating new ideas, seeking inspiration, and creatively refining their work. This contributes to conserving energy and maintaining motivation to perform design tasks.

DISCUSSION

A comparative analysis of educational standards of China's (Jiàoyùbù gāoděng xuéxiào, 2018; Wǔhàn Lǐgōng Dàxué, 2017; University of Wales Trinity Saint David & Wuhan University of Technology, 2013) and the United Kingdom's (Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education, 2019; University of Wales Trinity Saint David & Wuhan University of Technology, 2013) expected outcomes of educational and professional programs, soft skills, and indicators of creative activity can be represented in the form of a table.

Table 1

Comparison of requirements from national standards for professional teaching at the bachelor's level, expected outcomes of national and international educational-professional programs with flexible skills, and indicators of creative activity for future graphic design professionals

Subject benchmark statement for History of Art, Architecture and Design (UK)	Data on national standards for the quality of professional teaching at the bachelor's level in higher education institutions (China)	International educational-professional program of the University of Wales Trinity Saint David at Wuhan University of Technology in the field of graphic design	National educational-professional program in the field of visual communication design at Wuhan University of Technology	Soft skills	Indicators of creative activity
Information	Communication skills	Teamwork skills, effective collaboration with others	Proficiency in communication tools	Communicativeness	Interest
Initiative, openness to new things	Creative thinking, innovation	Creativity, ability to generate ideas, conceptual thinking	Proficiency in self-expression, innovation	Creativity	Originality
Autonomy	Design research skills	Research and creative inquiry skills	Problem-solving abilities	Problem-solving	Independence
Open-mindedness	Aesthetic abilities	Critical evaluation, analysis, aesthetic sensitivity	Aesthetic abilities	Critical thinking	Initiative
Time management	Activity planning	Independent workload management, adherence to deadlines, ability to work independently	Artistic design practice abilities	Time management	Energy

CONCLUSIONS

Soft skills and indicators of creative activity are interconnected and complement each other in the process of graphic design. The comparison of soft skills and personal qualities contributes to understanding how a graphic design professional can effectively leverage their technical skills in the creative domain. It also sheds light on how they organize and develop their personal attributes to achieve success in this field. Soft skills provide the foundation for the effective utilization of creative activity indicators. The interaction between skills and personality traits creates a favorable environment for the successful development and implementation of projects in graphic design.

It has been established that indicators of creative activity, such as initiative, energy, interest, independence, and originality, also play a crucial role in the graphic design process. The alignment of soft skills with indicators of creative activity regarding the educational process of future graphic design professionals has been demonstrated. Critical thinking is linked to initiative. Problem-solving is associated with independence. Creativity contributes to achieving originality. Communicativeness is reflected in interest. Time management indicates energy.

Further research is needed to determine levels of development of creative activity among future professionals in graphic design concerning the identified indicators.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:

ГНУЧКІ НАВИЧКИ ТА ТВОРЧА АКТИВНІСТЬ: АНАЛІЗ ВЗАЄМОЗВ'ЯЗКУ В ОСВІТІ МАЙБУТНІХ ФАХІВЦІВ З ГРАФІЧНОГО ДИЗАЙНУ

Мета – провести комплексний аналіз взаємозв'язку між гнучкими навичками та показниками творчої активності серед майбутніх фахівців графічного дизайну, використовуючи методи теоретичного аналізу нормативно-правових актів у галузі освіти. Актуальність цього дослідження визначається необхідністю розвитку гнучких навичок та творчої активності у майбутніх фахівців графічного дизайну в умовах сучасного ринку праці.

Методологія. Теоретичні методи включають огляд наукової літератури для розуміння чинних поглядів та досліджень щодо гнучких навичок та творчої активності для розкриття ключових понять і теорій. Аналіз та синтез використовуються для дослідження освітніх програм, стандартів Китайської народної республіки (КНР) та Великобританії, а також галузевих критеріїв у графічному дизайні, ідентифікації ключових елементів, пов'язаних із гнучкими навичками та творчою активністю.

Результати. Дослідження характеризує та уточнює, що освітні стандарти визнають важливість розвитку "гнучких навичок" у майбутніх фахівців графічного дизайну. Висвітлюється взаємодія та доповнюваність гнучких навичок та якостей особистості, які визначають конкретні знання, вміння та навички, а також відображають характерні особливості та цінності. Дослідження порівнює гнучкі навички (комунікація, креативність, розв'язання проблем, критичне мислення, тайм-менеджмент) із конкретними якостями особистості (інтерес, оригінальність, самостійність, ініціативність, енергійність) в контексті їх взаємозв'язку в галузі графічного дизайну.

Висновки. З'ясовано, що гнучкі навички та показники творчої активності взаємопов'язані та взаємодоповнюють одне одного у процесі проєктування графічного дизайну. Гнучкі навички надають основу для ефективного використання показників творчої активності. Окреслено, що подальшого дослідження потребує визначення рівнів формування творчої активності майбутніх фахівців графічного дизайну щодо зазначених показників.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: Китай, освітня програма, освітній стандарт, Велика Британія, вища освіта, особистісні риси.

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THE IMPACT OF LEARNING STRATEGIES ON ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNERS' READING COMPREHENSION SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

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Desta WENDAFEREW¹, & Abebe Damtew BERLIE²



¹ PhD candidate, Department of English Language and Literature, Wachemo University, Hosaena, Ethiopia.

✉ E-Mail: wendaferewdesta@gmail.com

🆔 <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-3192-5558>



² Dr., Department of Foreign Languages and Literature, Addis Ababa University, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia.

✉ E-Mail: abebe.damtew@aau.edu.et

🆔 <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-5568-5436>

ABSTRACT

Purpose. The aim of this study was to examine the impact of explicit reading strategy teaching English as a foreign language (EFL) on Ethiopian grade eleven learners' reading comprehension skills, particularly, reading for the gist, detail, vocabulary, inference, and reference skills.

Methodology. A quasi-experimental design was used, involving eighty-seven students (43 students in the control and 44 students in the experimental group). The students of the experimental class were exposed to four months of explicit reading strategy training, but no training was given to the students in the control group. Reading comprehension tests were given to both groups before and after training.

Results. The independent sample *t*-test revealed that there was no significant difference between the control and the experimental group in overall reading comprehension before the training, whereas the results of multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) for the post-test indicated

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students in the experimental group significantly outperformed their counterparts in terms of overall reading comprehension as well as the three reading comprehension skills, namely, reading for the gist, detail, and vocabulary. The post means of inference and reference skills for the experimental group were also higher than the post means of the control group though the differences were not statistically significant.

Conclusions. The study concluded that explicit reading strategy training promotes Ethiopian students' reading comprehension skills; hence, EFL students should be adequately supported and encouraged to use reading strategies to circumvent their reading comprehension difficulties.

KEYWORDS: English Reading, Comprehension Skills, Reading Strategies, Explicit Teaching, CALLA.

INTRODUCTION

People in different regions read in English either for academic or non-academic purposes. Therefore, adequate reading ability in English is essential to ensure success in education and professional life in the modern world (Grabe & Stoller, 2019). In Ethiopia, where the present study is conducted, English is the medium of instruction for secondary and university students (Getachew et al., 2018).

This highlights the importance of reading comprehension for learners' overall educational achievement. According to Grabe & Stoller (2019), reading involves comprehension, which entails identifying the main idea of a text, details that support the main idea, making inferences and vocabulary. According to the same authors, students are required to employ a combination of strategies including prior knowledge during reading.

Reading strategies such as summarizing, forming questions, imaging, predicting, activating background knowledge, and monitoring comprehension are among the important strategies for the comprehension and promotion of strategic readers (Chamot, 2005; Grabe, 2009). Furthermore, reading comprehension is a complex ability as it requires applying several unconscious and conscious strategies to determine the accurate text meanings (Jeon & Yamashita, 2014).

Reading strategies help students create the meaning of a text through purposeful and goal-orientated activities (Afflerbach et al., 2008). As a result, students use a variety of strategies to increase their reading comprehension (Grabe, 2009; Maeng, 2014). In this regard, both local and international studies appear to agree that strategies have better roles than the linguistic proficiency of the learner in certain skills (Mulugeta, 2021).

Furthermore, empirical evidence in learning strategies (henceforth LSs) training (e.g., Cohen, 2018; Grabe, 2009; Gu, 2019) pointed out that explicit strategy instruction is an integrated part of regular language lessons which is likely to be more effective than implicit teaching. Accordingly, several international researchers (e.g., Abdelhalim, 2017; Khellab et al., 2022; Li et al., 2022) have justified the contributions of explicit reading strategy training (Henceforth ERST) for EFL learners' reading comprehension problems.

Conversely, recently, the contribution of technology-based teaching in developing students' English language skills has attracted international researchers (Azizi et al.,

2022). Of course, we cannot hide the role of technology in our entire lifestyle, but using technologies for academic purposes in Ethiopia seems impractical.

Lately, Biresaw & Bogale (2023) explored the effect of a web-based feedback system in developing the reading skills of Ethiopian university students; the finding indicated that reading for gist, detail reading and inference skills were positively affected by the intervention. However, it can be noted that the participants of the study were university students, who may have more exposure to the use of technology compared to students at other schools. Therefore, strategy instruction seems necessary in Ethiopian schools where students have limited access to technology and little exposure to learning English outside the classrooms to promote their reading skills (Wendaferew & Damtew, 2023).

In fact, LSs may not be a panacea to fix the entire language acquisition problem, but they are very helpful in conjunction with other techniques (Griffiths, 2004). Through a process of teacher modeling, scaffolding, and assistance, students learn to be involved with texts strategically, and gradually independently practice LSs to better understand the text (Grabe, 2004). Therefore, there is a need to enhance our students' reading difficulties with the necessary support (i.e., scaffolding) by the teacher through explicit strategy training until students become independent readers.

Given the role of reading skills in student academic success and other everyday life activities; however, students' low reading comprehension ability has become a serious issue in Ethiopia. There have been continual complaints from EFL teachers about students' poor reading skills in Addis Ababa public secondary schools. For example, one EFL teacher in Tesfa Birhan secondary school complained that many of her students were unable to identify the meaning of words, the author's implied ideas, and the main ideas or gist of a passage.

In addition, Ethiopian EFL teachers failed to implement and adhere to the recommended teaching methods (Mulatu & Regassa, 2022). Therefore, the present researchers were initiated to implement ERST in teaching reading to determine whether the training enhances students' comprehension skills or not.

The notion of students' reading strategy use and the practice of teaching reading have been adequately studied in a local context (Mulatu & Regassa, 2022; Nurie, 2017; Tefera, 2013). Among others, Nurie (2017) explored the practices of teaching reading and suggested that Ethiopian teachers should systematically teach reading comprehension to help students develop strategies for improving reading comprehension.

However, the impact of explicit reading strategy training on students' reading comprehension skills has not been sufficiently addressed. A few local researchers (Dugasa et al., 2022; Wendaferew & Damtew, 2023; Yadetta et al., 2017) conducted related studies and confirmed the contribution of strategy training in promoting students' reading.

Finally, they recommended for the need of further inquiries. However, there have been some limitations in the previous studies; for example, they had short-term intervention sessions (not more than nine weeks) and didn't address the magnitude (the effect size) of the variables under investigation. Moreover, considering the importance of reading skills and learners' poor performance in Ethiopia, this area seems to be further investigated. Therefore, to fill this gap, the current research scrutinizes the impact of

ERST on reading for gist, details, vocabulary, inference and reference skills of EFL grade students, that is **the aim** of this study. Particularly, the study tries to answer the following three research questions.

1. Is there a statistically significant difference between the control and the experimental group in terms of overall reading comprehension pre-test mean scores?
2. Is there a significant difference between the control and the experimental group in terms of overall reading comprehension post-test mean scores?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference between the control and the experimental group in the post-test mean scores of reading for gist, detail, vocabulary, inference and reference comprehension skills?

METHODOLOGY

The study used a quasi-experimental with the pre-test-post-test control group design in which two intact classes were selected since random assignment was not possible (Creswell, 2014). The study mainly used quantitative data that was then analyzed quantitatively. Each procedure of this study is briefly discussed in the following sections.

The setting, subjects, and sampling techniques

Addis Ababa city was the research site due to its proximity and familiarity, which helped us to understand the research problem and easily collect the data. The secondary school environment was chosen since it is a place of *reading to learn* in which students are required to read about different subjects in their academic path. In other words, *reading to learn* frequently happens in academic settings where an individual must acquire a substantial amount of knowledge from a text (Grabe & Stoller, 2019). Tesfa Birhan secondary school was selected due to frequent complaints from EFL teachers about poor reading ability, and the lack of previous similar study to the current. We were informed that several students had failed university entrance exams during the previous academic years in different schools.

Therefore, grade 11 students were the target subjects, assuming the importance of working hard at this level is essential to improve students' reading ability. On the other hand, because of threats to the intervening variables in the experiment process, we decided to choose only two classes. Accordingly, eighty-seven subjects of the two intact classes were randomly selected from Tesfa Birhan secondary school. The selected classes were then assigned to the control and experimental groups.

The Reading Comprehension Test

To answer the research questions, the study used a standardized reading comprehension test. First, permission was obtained from the Educational Testing Service before using the test. Afterward, a reading comprehension test was adapted from the TOEFL, which was used as pre and post-tests. The adapted test contained two passages with twenty close-ended items.

Moreover, we added four open-ended items, particularly, reading for gist/main idea questions, to have a comprehensive understanding of the student's current level of

reading comprehension in the pre-test prior to the training, and in the post-test to observe the efficacy of the training in improving students' reading skills.

More specifically, the two items require students to summarize the main idea of the two passages using their own words, and the other two questions asked students to give topics seeing as the selected passages did not provide these. The test, generally, consisted of items related to the five reading comprehension skills (that is, 6 items for the gist / main idea, 7 items for the detail, 7 items for vocabulary, 2 items for inference, and 2 items for reference skills).

These reading comprehension skills were in line with the strategies practiced during the training sessions. It is important to mention that the post-test was identical to the pre-test because according to (Brown, 2017), it is feasible to administer the same test as the pre-and post-test to circumvent the issue of equating different forms of tests.

The threat to testing effect was controlled by administering the post-test after four months of the pretest administration. The pretest aimed to check whether students in the control and experimental groups were similar in terms of overall reading comprehension performance before the training. On the other hand, the post-test was administered to both groups to observe if there was a significant difference between the experimental and control groups in terms of overall reading as well as comprehension skills mean scores after the training.

Additionally, field notes were taken during the training, as it was believed to be important to supplement the main data and see how well the training was implemented (fidelity to treatment) by attending the training conditions, which in turn increased the reliability of the study results. According to Baker et al., (2023), the degree to which an intervention is carried out as intended is called treatment fidelity, which is crucial for intervention research to produce a valid comparison. Therefore, the researchers of the present study visited the research site once a week and recorded the training conditions based on conversations with the teacher who conducted the training.

Validity and reliability issues

As far as experimental study is concerned several threats could affect the outcomes. In the present study, we tried to minimize some of the threats. An EFL teacher on the research site and a PhD instructor at Addis Ababa University were invited to comment on the reading comprehension test to maintain face and content validity. Accordingly, some amendments were made.

For example, primarily, we proposed incorporating three reading passages in the test, but following the experts' comments, one of the passages was removed from the test. An attempt was also made to reduce potential threats towards the internal validity of the investigation, for example, to minimize teachers' history and biases related to the researchers, both the control and experimental groups were taught by the same teacher using the same reading tasks with similar period. Students' background in terms of reading comprehension was checked by administering the pre-test to the control and experimental groups.

The only difference was the teaching approach involving ERST in the experimental group. Regarding reliability, the same tool should be able to generate an identical response when applied to the same respondent within one to two weeks before

retesting (Muijs, 2022). Therefore, in this study, the reliability was assured by administering the test to students with similar backgrounds to the participants in the main study, but in different schools.

The test was administered for the second time after a week and then the results were assessed using Pearson's correlation. The Cronbach Alpha result was 0.892 indicating good reliability. Furthermore, the designed teaching material was reviewed by an expert. One of the English teachers at the research site was asked to review and comment on the content of the training material. As a result, some amendments were made; for example, the scanning strategy was removed from the material based on the suggestion of the teacher.

Ethical considerations

Several issues need to be considered while conducting research; researchers should respect the audiences or participants, use non-discriminatory language, and keep their anonymity (Creswell, 2014). The author states that it is important to show considerable respect for the site where the research will occur. This can be ensured by sending an earnest request for permission and obtaining the required permission before entering the research site. Consequently, ethical issues were considered while conducting the current study.

First, to get access to the research site, a letter of cooperation was written from the office of Addis Ababa University's foreign language and literature department to the concerned bodies in the study place (Tesfa Birhan Secondary School). Then the objectives and procedures of the study were explained to the school director, the EFL department head, and the EFL teacher to get their acceptance.

Having the necessary permission from the school, the training was given to one of the English teachers who conducted the training based on her willingness. Discussion was made with the participants of the students about the training. Based on their willingness, the participants were informed about the purpose of the study; they were told that the training and the test would not affect their achievement, and instead the process could be promising for their academic success.

Training manual and data collection procedure

The researchers prepared training material using the selected strategies together with reading activities in students' textbooks. The study was conducted during the second semester of the 2023 academic year; therefore, the training covered all the reading activities that were programmed for the second semester.

Despite various learning strategy divisions given by different scholars, for the current study, the reading strategies were mainly adopted (Grabe, 2004, 2009; Grabe & Stoller, 2019) because their classifications included various strategies relevant to the teaching of activities in the three reading stages (pre-, while, and post-reading). Since there are a plethora of strategies, for the present study, the following reading strategies were adopted: semantic mapping, placing new words into context, imagery, practicing, skimming, and taking notes, summarizing, highlighting, guessing; setting goals and objectives, self-monitoring and self-evaluating, self-encouragement, and cooperating.

These strategies are crucial in solving learners' difficulties related to reading the gist / main idea, details, vocabulary, inference, and reference skills, which are vital for student

academic success. For example, monitoring has been frequently cited as a key reading strategy for enhancing comprehension (Grabe, 2009). Furthermore, semantic mapping helps readers link previous and current knowledge and improves vocabulary knowledge (Barrios Núñez, 2018). Summarizing is a way of condensing the original passage. In summarizing, we use techniques like pictures or giving titles to what has been read.

Subsequently, a scholastic discussion was held in the form of training with an EFL teacher who conducted the training. The discussion was intended to inform the teacher about the concept and implementation of ERST in teaching reading. The interaction was collaborative and supported with questions and comments from the teacher. The trained teacher was encouraged to raise any unclear points. Following this, a pre-test was administered during the first week of the second semester.

A day after the pre-test, students in the experimental group received a four-month training over the entire semester based on the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach (here CALLA) procedure aiming at improving students' reading ability.

CALLA is an instructional method for second and foreign-language learners that includes teaching important topics from the content course, language skills necessary to learn at school, and explicit teaching using various LSs for academic tasks (Chamot & Robbins, 2005).

The model has the following teaching procedures: (1) Preparation: identifying the prior knowledge of the students' strategies; (2) Presentation: teachers present and model new LSs; (3) Practice: students practice the strategies they have learned through reading activities; (4) Evaluation: students assess their success; (5) Expansion: students are encouraged to transfer the LSs and apply it to new situations tasks. CALLA was chosen because it supports explicit teaching in a series of strategies and is effective in promoting learning comprehension skills (Grabe, 2004). On the other hand, no training was given to the students in the control group instead they were taught based on the usual teaching method.

Regarding the implementation of the training, it was conducted based on the schedule of the school. Depending on the information gained from Tesfa Birhan Secondary school principals, the target students had two reading periods per week with forty-five minutes for each period.

Thus, students in the experimental class had 90-minute training sessions each week. The researchers went to the school once a week and contacted the teacher who experimented if she faced any problems during the training. We also received reports from the teacher and recorded field notes about the training. Accordingly, the teacher was explicitly teaching the selected reading strategies using CALLA procedures (preparation, presentation, practice, and evaluation and expansion stages).

During preparation, the teacher tried to activate students' prior knowledge; in the presentation stage, the teacher explained and modelled the strategies in reading tasks; in the practice stage, the students were encouraged to practice the strategies; in the evaluation, the students had time to evaluate their use of the strategy, finally, students were encouraged to use the strategies they practised for different tasks outside of the classes.

For instance, the teacher explained and modeled how to guess the meaning of words. She told students while guessing they can use clues such as prefixes and suffixes and others such as, using information from text such as titles, headings, and pictures. She underlined that guessing is an important strategy to discover the meanings of words and identify the main idea of a passage.

During the recording of the field notes, we realized that after explaining each strategy, the teacher tried to model how to apply the strategies using specific reading activities. In this way, the teacher scaffolded students until they become strategic and independent readers. At the end of the training and the last semester of the academic year, both the control and the experimental group took the post-test.

Data Analysis Techniques

Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze the data. The collected data was organized and entered into the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 24 software. The pre-test scores of the control and experimental groups were computed using independent sample t-tests to check whether there was a significant difference between the control and experimental groups' overall reading comprehension before the training.

The post-test scores of the students in both groups for overall and five reading comprehension skills were calculated using multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to see whether the difference between the two groups was significant or not. This tool was used because it enables researchers to compute the data of several dependent variables simultaneously and see the combined results too (Muijs, 2022), in our case the five comprehension skills (i.e., gist, details, vocabulary, inference, and reference) and the overall reading comprehension.

RESULTS

To answer the first research question, students in the control and experimental groups were given a pretest to check whether they were similar or not in their current levels of reading comprehension. An independent sample test was run to see if the pretest mean scores between the two groups were statistically significant or not before the training.

Table 1

Descriptive and inferential statistical analysis of the pretest scores for both groups

Group	N	M	Std. Deviation	T	Df	Sig. (2- tailed)
control	43	13.1395	2.52211	.788	85	.433
experimental	44	13.6136	3.05923			

As shown in Table 1 the pretest mean score of the experimental group (13.6136) is slightly greater than the pretest means of the control group (13.1395). However, the independent sample t-test result (T=0.788, Df=85, P=.433) indicated the difference was not statistically significant as the P value (P=0.433) was greater than the cut point 0.05.

Therefore, the result suggested that the students in the control and experimental groups were relatively homogeneous in terms of overall reading comprehension achievement before training. Then, ERST was given for the experimental group followed by post-test

administration to both groups to address the second research question. The following table shows the descriptive results, first.

Table 2

Descriptive analysis of the reading comprehension skills post-test scores for both groups

Descriptive Statistics				
Skills	Group	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Gist	Control	6.0233	1.10170	43
	Experimental	6.6364	1.29563	44
	Total	6.3333	1.23577	87
Detail	Control	2.6744	.86523	43
	Experimental	3.3182	.80037	44
	Total	3.0000	.88921	87
Vocabulary	Control	2.7674	1.06541	43
	Experimental	4.0682	1.08687	44
	Total	3.4253	1.25413	87
Inference	Control	1.3953	.54070	43
	Experimental	1.5682	.50106	44
	Total	1.4828	.52523	87
Reference	Control	1.4884	.50578	43
	Experimental	1.5455	.50369	44
	Total	1.5172	.50260	87

The post-test mean score results for each reading comprehension skills in Table 2 show that the experimental group performed better compared to the control group after the training. MANOVA was computed to check whether the observed difference was statistically significant or not. First, analysis of MANOVA for overall reading comprehension result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Analysis of MANOVA for overall reading comprehension performance of the post-test

Multivariate Tests							
	Effect	Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Group	Pillai's Trace	.314	7.400b	5.000	81.000	.000	.314
	Wilks' Lambda	.686	7.400b	5.000	81.000	.000	.314
	Hotelling's Trace	.457	7.400b	5.000	81.000	.000	.314
	Roy's Largest Root	.457	7.400b	5.000	81.000	.000	.314

The Multivariate tests analysis in Table 3 presents the combined results of the reading comprehension skills. Consequently, the MANOVA result under Wilks' Lambda ($df=81.00$, $P=.000$) showed that there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental and the control groups regarding their overall reading comprehension post-test mean scores after the intervention. In other words, the experimental group benefited from the training with the effect size (Partial Eta=0.314) indicating a moderate relationship.

According to Muijs (2022), Eta squared from 0 to 0.1 is a weak effect, 0.1 to 0.3 is a modest one, 0.3 to 0.5 is a moderate, and >0.5 is a strong effect. The last research question asks whether there is a statistically significant difference between the control and the experimental group in reading for gist, detail, vocabulary, inference, and reference post-test mean scores. The results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Control & Experimental Group	Gist	8.175	1	8.175	5.642	.020	.062
	Detail	9.013	1	9.013	12.987	.001	.133
	Vocabulary	36.794	1	36.794	31.761	.000	.272
	Interference	.650	1	.650	2.393	.126	.027
	Reference	.071	1	.071	.278	.599	.003

The 'Tests of Between-Subjects Effects', in Table 4 shows the separate analysis of the five dependent variables. As a result, the MANOVA post-test result indicated that a significant difference was found between the control and experimental group with the three reading comprehension skills: reading for the gist, details, and vocabulary since the P values for the three skills were less than the cut-off point ($P<0.05$).

To put it differently, the results of MANOVA for the post-test mean of gist skill ($F=5.642$, $P=0.020$) revealed that there was a statistically significant difference between the experimental and the control group. The post-test results for detail reading ($F=12.987$, $P=0.001$) showed that the difference was statistically significant. Similarly, the post-test mean score of vocabulary skill ($F=31.761$, $P=0.00$) indicated that the difference between the two groups was statistically significant after the intervention.

Therefore, the post-test result indicated that the experimental group significantly outperformed the control group in reading for gist, detail reading and vocabulary skills after the training. In addition, although the post-test means of the experimental group for inference and reference skills were higher than the post-means of the control group, the results of MANOVA showed that there were no significant differences between the groups in terms of inference ($P=0.126$) and reference (0.599) skills since the P-value was higher than the cut-off point.

The effect size for detail and vocabulary skills were 0.133 and 0.272 respectively, indicating the modest relationships. However, the effect size for the rest skills was weak as the value of Partial Eta Squared was less than 0.1.

DISCUSSION

The aim of the study was to examine the impact of ERST on Ethiopian EFL students' reading comprehension skills, namely, reading for the gist, detail, vocabulary, inference, and reference. Before the intervention, a pre-test was administered to the control and the experimental groups to check the homogeneity of the participants in terms of their reading comprehension. Accordingly, the independent sample t-test showed that there was no statistically significant difference between the control and the experimental group in the pre-test mean scores. The result indicated that students in both groups had nearly similar reading comprehension levels prior to training.

Afterward, students in the experimental group were exposed to a four-month ERST followed by administering a post-test to both groups. Finally, the result of MANOVA revealed that a significant difference was found between the control and the experimental group in terms of overall reading comprehension post-test mean scores.

This implies that students in the experimental group outperformed their counterparts (the control group) because of the training. The result is in agreement with the findings of both foreign and local previous researchers (Abdelhalim, 2017; Al Raqqad et al., 2019; Khellab et al., 2022; Wendaferew & Damtew, 2023), who confirmed the contributions of explicit reading strategy in promoting EFL students' reading comprehension achievement.

However, the fact that the association is significant does not indicate how strong or weak the effect is, hence, the effect size needs to be calculated (Muijs, 2022). Therefore, the effect size, which was not the focus of the previous researchers, was calculated in the present study.

Moreover, there were significant differences between the control and the experimental group in the post-test mean scores of the three reading comprehension skills: reading for gist, detail and vocabulary questions. On the other hand, the post-test mean scores of the experimental group for the inference and reference skills were higher than the post-test means of the control group, however; the difference was not statistically significant.

The magnitude or effect size of the relationship for both overall reading comprehension as well as for each reading comprehension skill was calculated. In this regard, the Partial Eta Squared result for the overall reading comprehension indicated the relationship was moderate. On the other hand, the effect size for detail and vocabulary skills was modest, followed by weak relations for the rest comprehension skills.

Finally, it is important to note that since there is scanty research investigating the effectiveness of ERST on EFL students' reading comprehension skills, the present study would contribute to the field and encourage future researchers to deal with the issue in detail. In summary, the result of the current study supports the recommendation of pioneer experts (Grabe, 2009; Grabe & Stoller, 2019), who indicated that students with reading difficulties can be taught a repertoire of reading strategies for better comprehension.

CONCLUSIONS

The present study mainly scrutinized the impact of ERST via CALLA procedure on grade eleven EFL students' reading comprehension skills. Prior to the training, the study confirmed that the target students were at the same level of reading comprehension. However, after the intervention, a significant difference was found between the control and the experimental group in overall reading comprehension¹ as well as in the three comprehension skills (gist, detail, and vocabulary), in favor of the experimental group. The effect size for the overall reading comprehension after the intervention was at a moderate level.

Moreover, the students in the experimental group scored higher post-test mean scores for inference and reference skills though the differences were not statistically significant. Consequently, it can be inferred that ERST using CALLA can promote EFL students' reading comprehension skills. In this sense, EFL students should be adequately supported and encouraged to use reading strategies to promote their reading comprehension skills.

Increments of participants, especially enlarging the experimental group, would be important for future researchers to confidently generalize the results in a wider context. Additionally, this study focused on reading comprehension skills, particularly, reading for gist/main idea, details, vocabulary, inference, and reference, which were supposed to be vital for students' academic success. Thus, future researchers could consider involving other comprehension skills for more comprehensive insights.

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CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

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АНОТАЦІЯ / ABSTRACT [in Ukrainian]:

ВПЛИВ СТРАТЕГІЙ НАВЧАННЯ НА РОЗВИТОК НАВИЧОК РОЗУМІННЯ ПРОЧИТАНОГО З АНГЛІЙСЬКОЇ МОВИ ЯК ІНОЗЕМНОЇ

Мета цього дослідження полягала в тому, щоб дослідити вплив стратегії читання під час викладання англійської як іноземної (EFL) на навички розуміння прочитаного ефіопськими учнями одинадцятого класу, зокрема на навички читання для отримання загального розуміння тексту, його деталей, словникового запасу, висновків і бібліографічних навичок.

Методологія. Було використано квазі-експериментальний дизайн, у якому взяли участь вісімдесят сім учнів (43 учня контрольної та 44 учня експериментальної групи). Учні експериментального класу протягом чотирьох місяців навчалися стратегії читання для отримання загального розуміння тексту, але учні контрольної групи не отримали такого навчання. Тести на розуміння прочитаного тексту проводилися для обох груп до і після навчання.

Результати. Незалежний вибірковий *t*-тест показав, що не було суттєвої різниці між контрольною та експериментальною групою в загальному розумінні прочитаного тексту до початку навчання, тоді як результати багатофакторного дисперсійного аналізу (MANOVA) після проведеного навчання в тесті показали, що учні експериментальної групи суттєво перевершили учнів контрольної групи щодо загального розуміння прочитаного тексту, а також перевершили їх в трьох навичках розуміння прочитаного, а саме: загальне розуміння тексту, його деталей, словникового запасу. Середні значення результатів наприкінці дослідження для висновків і бібліографічних навичок для експериментальної групи також були вищими, ніж для контрольної групи, хоча відмінності не були статистично значущими.

Висновки. Дослідження дійшло висновку, що навчання стратегії читання сприяє розвитку навичок розуміння прочитаного тексту в ефіопських учнів; отже, учнів, які вивчають англійську мову як іноземну, слід належним чином підтримувати та заохочувати до використання стратегій читання, щоб уникнути труднощів із розумінням прочитаного тексту.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: читання англійською мовою, навички розуміння, стратегії читання, навчання, CALLA

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H.S. Skovoroda Kharkiv National Pedagogical University,
Alchevskyh str., 29, Kharkiv, 61002, Ukraine.

E-MAIL:

educationalchallengesjournal@gmail.com

OFFICIAL WEBSITE:

<http://educationalchallenges.org.ua/>

Харківський національний педагогічний університет
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Україна, 61002, м. Харків, вул. Алчевських, 29.

