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BIENDED LEARNING AND ITS IMPACT ON QUALITY OF EDUCATION

A series of reforms in the sphere of education, globalization as well as integration of Ukraine into the Bologna process and other international agreements foster formation of new approaches and elaboration of advances criteria for evaluating the quality of education and impact positively on students' success and their training in compliance with the demands of the XXI-st century. Technological development is not only dynamic and futuristic, which surely influences the educational system in the world as well as in Ukraine. With regard to this situation, the Ministry of Education of Ukraine takes active steps to develop new approaches and criteria in the educational system with reference to with teaching and the educational process in general.

Emergence of advanced technologies has brought about the newest concepts of conducting educational activity, which can ensure success and help train highly-skilled specialists in conditions, which are ultimate and comfortable for students. One of the examples of such educational concept can be the idea of an open university. Open education is a complex social system able to respond quickly to the changing socio-economic situations as well as individual and group requests and requirements. Development of the idea of open education requires mentioning not the development of different educational content, but application of a different methodological approach to its elaboration. The basis for the educational process in open education is formed by task-oriented, controlled and intensive self-development workdone by students at a convenient place as part of an individual curriculum with a set of purpose-built tutorials and an agreed possibility of contact with a teacher as well as contact among themselves. The aim of open education is training students for full and effective participation in social and professional life under the conditions of the information and telecommunication society.

Features that distinguish higher education institutions providing such educational services are: Application of purpose-built techniques and tutorials – application of computers, network tools, multimedia technologies, special software in training courses development and teaching students; test assessment of the education quality – application of computer-based test systems; economic feasibility – improvement of the ratio between the result achieved and the time, finance and other resources required for its achievement compared with the traditional forms of education; Flexibility – ability to study at the convenient place and time as well as the pace; Modularity – ability to form an individual curriculum which meets students' personal needs from the set of independent training courses;

Concurrency – ability to study along with basic professional activity; Asynchrony – training techniques implementation at a convenient schedule for each student. The new role of the teacher lies in the function of coordinating the educational process, correcting the content of the discipline, consulting on development of an individual curriculum, supervising educational projects via information telecommunication technologies; New role of students – higher requirements to self-organization, motivation, self-development work skills and industriousness; Implementation of information telecommunication technologies in education; Internationality – ability to export and import educational services.

The concept of open education can form grounds for the common open education space based on distance learning. It is based on the mindset and methodological basis of openness and continuity of the cognition process. Many educators and scholars believe that implementation of technologies as a teaching tool encourages students' learning as well as meets the basic aims, namely the accessibility and high quality of education. Moreover, the world of information technologies enables teachers to interact with students outside textbooks and increase their accessibility to knowledge. The World Wide Web also enables communication between teachers and students as well as their cooperation and sharing interesting ideas with people in different places. Development of computer network technologies become one of the most promising platforms for the development of modern distance learning system, electronic learning and mobile learning, which are successfully implemented in various forms of education. To put it differently, computer technologies are an integral part in the success of the concept of open universities, the system of which is based on electronic education. The development of e-learning brought about formation of a new direction – blended learning. In connection to this, the world sees rapid development of the industry based on the development of e-learning software packages for various directions, including content delivery as well as learning management systems, which combine administration, communication, knowledge assessment and training course development tools. Blended learning is the education environment, which integrates technologies into the education process along with traditional pedagogical practices. Implementation of blended learning in teaching and learning faces certain problems demanding solution covering pedagogical aspects, teaching styles, education activity forms as well as teachers' preparedness to new monitoring and assessment systems.

We consider the aim of blended learning to be the integration of the advantages of traditional and distance learning with ICTs, thus creation of an education environment, in which students and teachers can effectuate successfully the teaching and learning process under mutually convenient conditions, teachers can explain the learning materials in summary, while making emphasis and providing a detailed explanation for difficult issues in class, and students study the rest of the material on their own; personal and online consultations are held; students

pay more attention to the development of practical skills in class etc. This approach enables to extend students' autonomy and radically changes the vector of teachers and students' interaction.

Learning with the help of ICT presupposes application various web platforms (Blackboard VLE, LMS, Moodle i MOOC). Students are granted access to video lectures, tasks for self-development work and test materials, have an ability to communicate with teachers and other students and are able to process additional materials on certain topics. However, it is clear that even the use of the same platform does not guarantee that teachers and students have the same algorithm of work.

It is worth to generalize blended learning models studied by foreign scholars. 1. «Face-to-Face Driver» model, implementation of which presupposes studying the basic part of the educational program in class with direct interaction with the teacher and electronic learning is supplementary to the basic program (most often, work with electronic resources is organized on computers during the class). 2. «Rotation» model presupposes division of the educational process into individual e-learning and in-class learning in interaction with the teacher who can also provide support students' e-learning remotely. 3. In «Flex» model the bigger part of the curriculum is mastered via e-learning, the teacher supports students' learning from the distance and complex issues are mastered at in-class consultations in small groups or individually. 4. Implementation of «Online Lab» model presupposes mastering the program via e-learning in computer-equipped classrooms and supported by the teacher (in combination with traditional education forms). 5 In «Self-blend» model students independently select optional courses provided by various education institutions.

Application of blended learning may become one of the key solutions to the existing problems in the sphere of education. Distance learning technologies must become one of the key means of organizing the educational process. Application of blended learning may enable to simplify solution of the above-mentioned problems. The advantages of blended learning include: provision of effective instruments for education management; increase in the number of students with access to high-quality education; the ability to involve bigger audiences in the proposed course or program. Electronic course may involve thousands of people in the learning process while classrooms are limited in the amount of places; smaller workload of the academic staff; education quality improvement (in particular, by means of effective learning tools application); natural mastering of modern work management tools and communication means. Electronic courses enable to study at any time convenient for the student and consume the amount of time students are ready to devote to learning materials, while conventional studying is limited in time and defined by the curriculum; cost of education – students pay only for the necessary level of training, thus, concentrating on the problem of particular interest for them, while traditional learning presupposes learning all materials within the curriculum; speed of learning – necessary learning materials are ready for use in full while in the traditional learning process the necessary literary sources and tutorials may not be accessed at once. One more strength of blended learning is the ability to work out an individual learning trajectory for a student and a teacher, constant interaction with fellow students and teachers as well as the student's responsibility for the results. On balance, blended learning fosters education quality improvement because it provides for not only in-class students' learning activity, but also continual and regular self-development work with the application of advanced software and ICTs, which ensures continuity of the education process.

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