COURSE DESIGN IN AMERICAN AND UKRAINIAN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS USING IT

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As a result of coronavirus quarantine measures in most countries of the world the educators have switched from face-to-face classes to online teaching. No matter whether such format has been either familiar or completely new to our colleagues, it revealed its challenges and necessity of exploring new ways of teaching. In terms of American-Ukrainian collaboration we have decided to compare and outline some IT-based elements of educational process in both countries that can help to improve our courses and teaching strategies.

First, it should be noted that since the 21st century a variety of networks (like Educator, Blackboard, WebCT, Angel, Canvas, etc.) have been widely introduced in American educational institutions. It has been pointed out by educators that many software programs have become better and easier to use. A broad range of assignments, attachment of new files, navigation through the various instructions and professor/student communication can be done online. While Ukrainian universities typically post syllabuses, announcements and other policies on their official websites, the main way to communicate with students is either face-to-face interaction or via personal emails, Viber/ WhatsApp/ Telegram messages. In both cases it should be clarified to students what time they are expected to message, get feedback, send a reply.

One of the burning issues for educators is, in fact, the learner's self-motivation. Both American and Ukrainian professors agree that certain students need classroom structure to succeed. Social interaction mediates the learning process. In particular, critical thinking involves multidimensional view of things that is easier to provide during live discussions in classrooms. The exchange of opinions opens up the participants' minds and can stimulate their thinking. Still, the dynamics of such interaction is more hidden and slower in terms of online courses. These issues should be taken into account while creating your own courses, setting up learning goals, developing a plan for fostering social relationships, introducing learning activities, etc.

Another interesting aspect of educational environment in the US and Ukraine is the equipment of classrooms that influences different combinations of teaching and learning strategies. According to comparatively small budget of Ukrainian colleges and universities you won't find impressive facilities in most classrooms. Nevertheless, there is free access to books and other supplementary material for students who do not pay for this as American peers do. While the latter can find excuses in failing to complete assignments because of not reliable Internet or PC at home, Ukrainian students are fully responsible for their own resources to finish their tasks. While the US professors are privileged to use overhead projectors in face-to-

face classroom environments, the Ukrainian colleagues deliver their lectures and presentations engaging students' own mobile phones or laptops to download and study prepared material.

While developing computer-based meaningful learning activities it should be remembered that students don't learn because the instructor does some activity, students learn through their own activity. Evolvement of human being voluntary processes from the childhood is beneficial for the formation of learning skills (or self-training). Better time management (e.g., building timeline for completing the assignments), patience, critical analysis of resources used for studying the topics are becoming even more crucial in terms of online learning.

It would be also fair to add that in American culture the protection of copyright is more important and the citation in papers and presentations is more strictly controlled compared to post-soviet countries. It is more and more challenging for new generations in Ukraine to respect intellectual property that they use either in their research studies or everyday lives. Nevertheless, all these skills and attitudes can be taught and developed.

It is obvious that virtual environment provides us enormous resources for teaching, studying, entertainment, etc. that become great potential tools to enrich our prsonalities. But to use any tool we need to improve our skills, get experience and advance new practices blending it, as we see reasonable, with other approaches.