



ONLINE CRASH COURSE “DISCOVER UKRAINE WITH THE UKRAINIAN LANGUAGE”: THE CONTENT AND METHODOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

ОНЛАЙН КРАШ КУРС “ВІДКРИЙ УКРАЇНУ УКРАЇНСЬКОЮ МОВОЮ” ЗМІСТ І МЕТОДИЧНЕ ЗАБЕЗПЕЧЕННЯ

Сорокіна Н. / Sorokina N.

канд.пед. наук, доцент

0000-0003-3997-2205

University of Innsbruck, Innrain 52, Innsbruck, Austria

Taras Shevchenko National University of Kyiv, Volodymyrska, 62, Kyiv, Ukraine

Abstract. *The paper presents the insights of e-learning education and organizing an online crash course in particular. Goals, content and methodological support peculiarities of the online Crash Course “Discover Ukraine with the Ukrainian language” reflect the originality and actuality of the idea. The evaluation data illustrate the effectiveness and methodological expediency of the Course materials, structure and format.*

Key words: *online crash course, content, e-learning, blended learning, Ukrainian as a foreign language.*

Introduction.

Educational innovations, the introduction of information and communication technologies into the teaching practices are among the highest challenges and topics of all the European countries. The most often used term after the pandemic is “new normal.” In educational sphere it is associated with the growing use of online learning. The COVID-19 pandemic, war conflict in Ukraine made educators look for the new ways of teaching to continue with the process of educating students. The “new normal” today is a concept of education with online learning at the core of this transformation (Bailey, et., 2013). Online learning has become as a necessary and sometimes the only resource for students and schools worldwide. For many educational institutions, this is an entirely new way of education that they have had to adopt. Online learning is now applicable not just to learn academics but it also extends to learning extracurricular activities for students and nonstudents. In recent months, the demand for online learning has risen significantly, and it will continue doing so in the future.

Course description.

In accordance with the latest educational trends and responding to the growing interest of Europeans to Ukraine, the Ukrainian language and culture the University of Innsbruck initiated an online Crash course “Discover Ukraine with the Ukrainian language” taught in Summer Semester 2022. That was also a good act to express solidarity of Europe with Ukraine in the time of war conflict.

The aim of the course was to develop elementary communicative skills to satisfy the needs in communication in everyday life; get learners familiar with the Ukrainian Cyrillic and possess minimal grammar and vocabulary necessary to understand and interact in some basic everyday situations. Another important goal of the Course was to develop learners’ awareness about Ukraine, Ukrainian people, country’s history, customs and traditions.



The online mode of the Course increased the number of participants significantly (there were 100 registrations) and widened the access geographically. There were representatives from Austria, Germany, Italy, France, Great Britain, Check Republic, Slovakia, and Denmark. Hence, English as the language of instruction was highly appreciated by the English and German speaking learners.

The online Crash Course “Discover Ukraine with the Ukrainian language” comprised three 90 minutes zoom sessions. Each lesson combined communicative, phonetic, grammar and sociocultural materials to develop communicative competence in listening, reading, speaking and writing. The Course content covered the following topics: “Greetings and getting acquainted”, “Countries, nationalities and languages”, “Numbers: index, address, telephone numbers, age”, “Family relations”, “Professions and occupations”, “At the interview: filling the registration form”.

In methodological context task-based learning as an active learning approach (Ellis, 2018) focusing on the process of fulfilling the meaningful communicative task through asking and refining questions, discussing ideas, making predictions, designing plans, collecting and analyzing data, communicating ideas to others, asking new questions, and completing the task (Nunan, 2004) proved to be beneficial in the Course content. Additionally the rational use of online interaction and various types of didactic materials provided learners with the possibility to combine online and offline practice in accordance with their educational needs. This goes in line with the blended learning framework which claims to be novel approach to create an effective learning environment to achieve best possible outcomes (Spasova, 2021).

The goal of sociocultural “inserts” in the content of the intensive learning session was to get students “discover” Ukraine as a European country, learn more about its long history, culture, people, language, main cities, customs and traditions. This raised the learners’ interest to the language and therefore fostered their learning motivation, which led to the improved the outcomes.

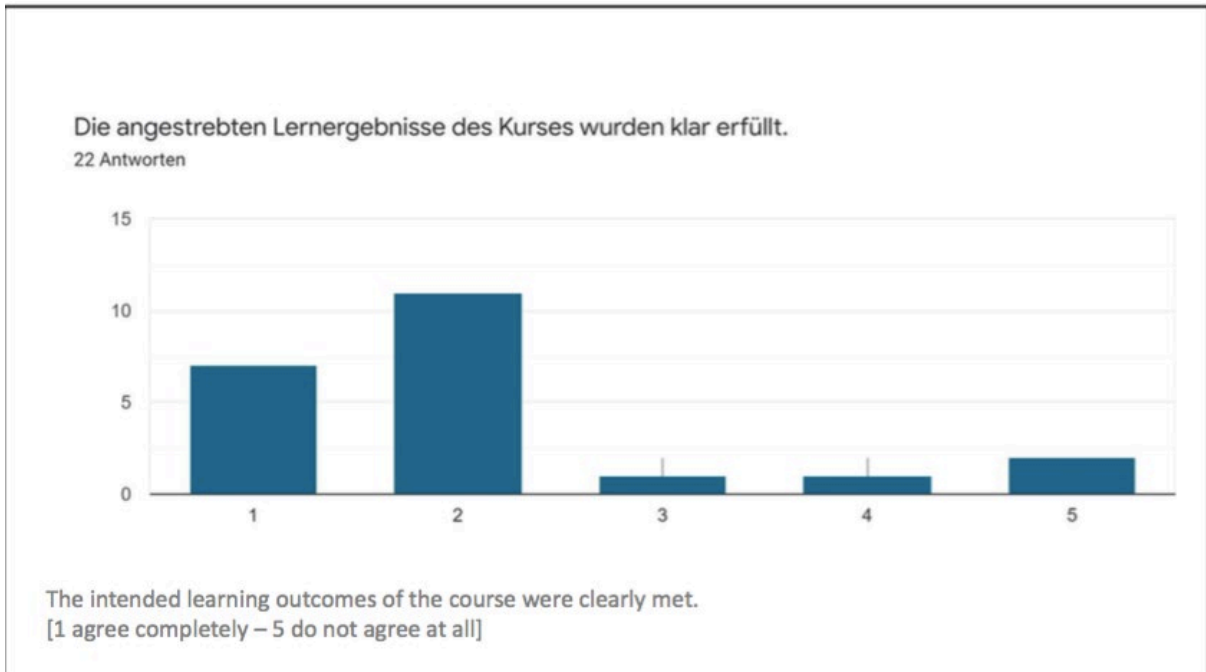
Methodology.

To check the effectiveness of the online we conducted the follow up online survey. 22 respondents evaluated the online Course in various aspects: content, user-friendliness, structure, instructions quality, didactic materials, technical support etc. The data received via follow up questionnaire reflect exclusively positive attitudes towards the Course content and its outcomes: *Picture 1*

The above given diagrams clearly indicate the Course content and structure didactic expediency and its effectiveness.

Additionally, the collected and data witness the raising motivation level and sustainable desire to continue studying Ukrainian as a foreign language: *Picture 2*

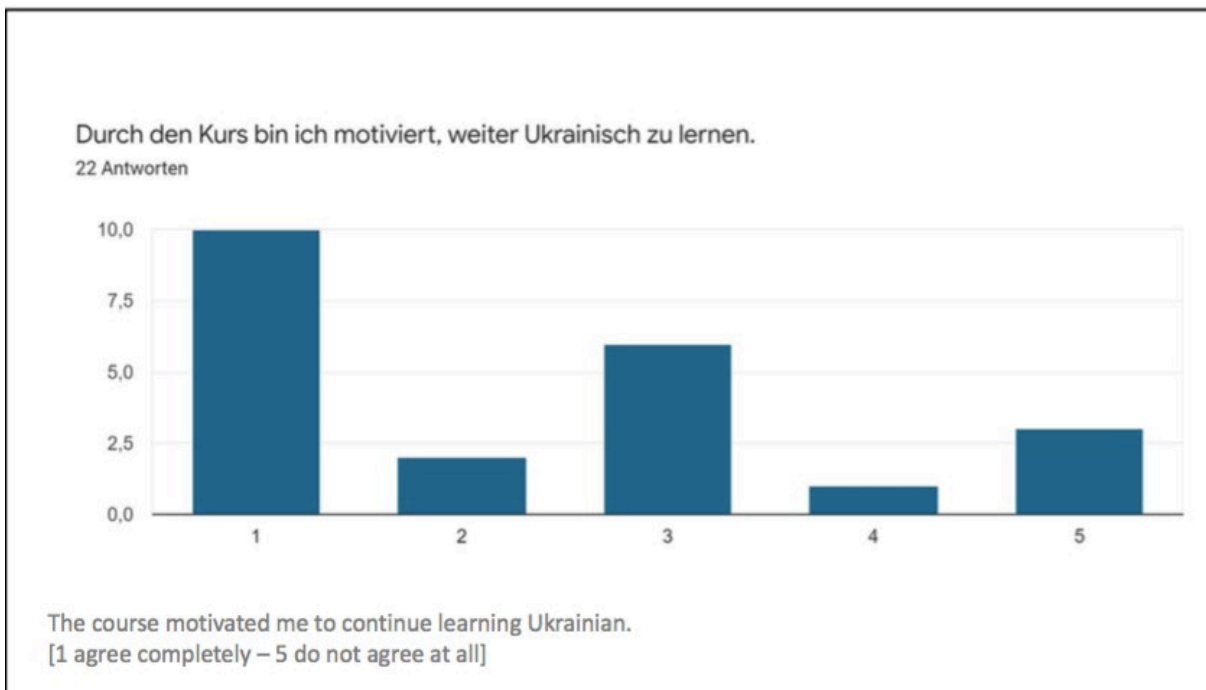
The use of a padlet (<https://padlet.com/Osteuropazentrum/Ukrainisch>) as the basic online platform gave the participants unlimited access to all course mandatory didactic materials, lesson recordings and additional input for further practice and extra resources to deepen knowledge of the Ukrainian language, Ukraine and Ukrainians. *Picture 3*



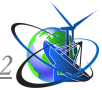
Notes on that

- Great enthusiasm of the lecturer!
- The fact that the announced learning outcomes were not 100 per cent fulfilled in my case was due to my lack of active participation. They were completely fulfilled by the organisers.
- I have to repeat more often
- Could already implement the short Ukrainian phrases in the work, was very useful!

Picture 1 Learning outcomes

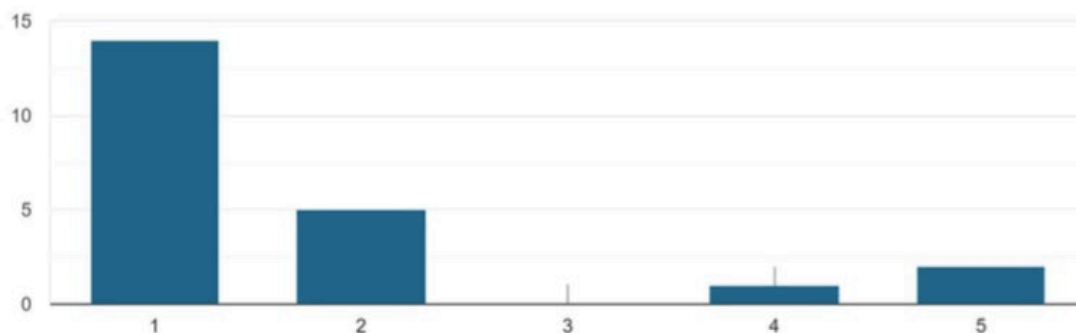


Picture 2 Motivation



Die über das Padlet zur Verfügung gestellten Materialien waren gut aufbereitet und haben mich beim Lernen unterstützt.

22 Antworten



The materials provided via the Padlet were well prepared and supported my learning.
[1 agree completely – 5 do not agree at all]

Notes on that

- Padlet is a wonderful enrichment!
- Concerning "Contributing to the course and asking questions" see comment above.
- Great materials to deepen your knowledge!
- The documents were also very useful for repeating the course.

Picture 3 Tools and didactic support

At the same time these recourses provided an effective support to get extra practice through combining online and offline exercising choosing individual learning trajectories. Majority of respondents valued the possibility to revise and practice even after the course was complete.

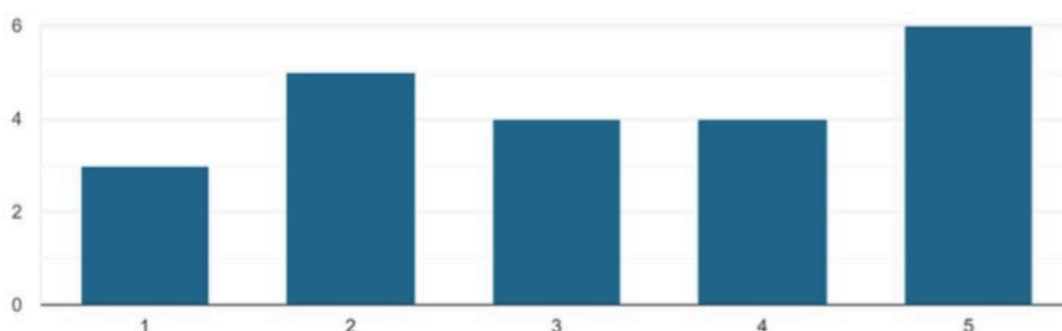
Picture 5 depicts the rate of participants' attitude to the Course format and its length, which may be interpreted as generally positive, but still some respondents would prefer traditional classroom instead. This fact makes us think more about implementing the other models of blended learning developing relevant didactic and methodological support. *Picture 4*

To sum up it is important to highlight that online crash course format embraces the advantages of both online and offline teaching and learning. It has scope for collaborative learning; constructive learning and computer assisted learning (CAI), on the one hand. On the other hand, implementation of online crash courses needs rigorous efforts, right attitude, sufficient didactic materials, strategies, techniques and highly motivated teachers and students for its success. Moreover, the experience of teaching a Crash course of Ukrainian as a foreign language revealed a significant gap between the enormous desire to acquire the language and absence of didactic materials to provide this process effectively. This makes the prospective goal of our further research.



Ich würde mir für die Fortsetzung des Kurses ein anderes Format (in Präsenz bzw. mehr Einheiten) wünschen.

22 Antworten



I would like to see the course continued in a different format (face-to-face or more units).
[1 agree completely – 5 do not agree at all]

Picture 4 Course format

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Анотація. У статті розглядаються особливості онлайн освіти і організації онлайн краш курсу, зокрема. Мета, зміст і особливості методичної підтримки відтворюють оригінальність і актуальність ідей. Запропоновано результати оцінювання ефективності курсу і методичної доцільності матеріалів курсу, його структури і формату проведення.

Ключові слова: онлайн краш курс, зміст, онлайн і змішане навчання, українська мова як іноземна.