

ІННОВАЦІЇ В ЗАКЛАДАХ ОСВІТИ

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DIGITALIZATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION AS A MEANS TO ENSURE STUDENT ACCESS AND INCLUSION IN GLOBAL LEARNING SPACE WITH REGARD TO COVID-19 WORLD CRISIS

The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic slowdown has extensively affected the economy and prospects of growth for the countries of Eastern Europe – it has added to their multi-layered development challenges. Although the pandemic has been felt across different sectors of economy and social life of the countries, its impact has varied substantially. One of the highest negative impacts has been observed in the sector of education, particularly higher education with regard to the provision of educational services to foreign citizens, which rely on the key actors' physical mobility. Thus, tailored policies are necessary as various Eastern European countries and various types of policy makers have been affected differently.

Within the context of this research it is important to differentiate the notions of “foreign student” and “mobile student”. According to analytical studies carried out with the assistance of UNESCO and the OECD, the terms “mobile student” and “foreign student” have different interpretations (OECD, 1996; UNESCO, 2013; 2014). In our monograph on internationalization of higher education in the countries of Eastern Europe (Myhovych, 2020) we define a mobile student as the one who has crossed a national or territorial border with the aim of study and at the moment of statistical cut he/she is outside the country of the native origin. A foreign student is defined as a student who is not a citizen of the country where statistical data are collected. This definition might be enlarged and might state that a foreign student is a foreign citizen, who is in the country of study in order to obtain education, increase one's level, or perform research at research or educational institutions. The whole history of physical mobility – that is the history of foreign students – shows that they not only directly and indirectly transfer advanced technologies and scientific knowledge from country to country, but

also promote political, ideological, cultural, etc. views acquired abroad. Among foreign students the following groups are distinguished: (1) *non-citizen students* (NCS) – foreign citizens who have permanent residence permit in the country, but are not citizens of the state; they have all the rights and freedoms as citizens of the state while maintaining their own citizenship; such students have migration documents certifying their foreign citizenship and not confirming the new citizenship of such a person; (2) *non-resident students* (NRS) – foreign citizens who have temporary residence permit in the country for the purpose of study; in the vast majority of cases, such a permit is issued by the migration service of the respective country and guarantees the stay of a foreigner on the territory of a foreign state during the entire period of his study (Myhovych, 2020).

The existing research works on the topic of provision of educational services to foreign students in Eastern Europe shows that the vast majority of papers is aimed at covering the following issues: *language acquisition among foreign students* (O. Bilyk, T. Dementieva, O. Zaporozhets, T. Kapitonova, O. Kovtunenکو, O. Lazareva, O. Mitrofanova, K. Motina, M. Sidora, T. Filat, etc.); *psychological adaptation of foreign students to new socio-cultural conditions* (A. Borisova, M. Ivanova, O. Izotova, T. Ulianova; A. Carey, D. McNamara, R. Harris, R. Rust, L. Ward, O. Klineberg, etc.). The question of how to teach and how to adapt with regard to foreign citizens has been analysed in the works of Ph. Altbach who is recognized as one of the leading experts in the field. Other theoretical explorations and case studies cover various aspects of adaptation of foreigners, the specifics of the process of providing / obtaining knowledge when working with foreign citizens, motives for choosing the country of study and higher education institution, national migration policies, adaptability of educational content, etc. The works by V. Andrushchenko, V. Ognevyuk, M. Safonova, T. Shmonina, M. Stepko, T. Finikov and many other highlight the issues of international student mobility, aspects of educational migration, conceptual basis for international cooperation in the field of higher education, etc.

The extensive research in the field of mobility, provision of educational services to foreigners, global vs international vs intercultural education demonstrates the common knowledge that higher education institutions (HEIs) of the millennium function within global competitive environment having country borders, supporting cultural diversity, and at the same time moving towards Europeanization (globalization) (Barth et al., 2007). The pressure to achieve scientific and didactic excellence, while at the same time meeting the requirements in terms of transparency, flexibility, quality of operation is increasing year by year, and the year 2020 became no exception. On the contrary, in 2020 HEIs faced, along with numerous political, legal, economic, social, and technological challenges, the COVID-19 crisis, which forced European academic community to reflect on how the 2020 unprecedented situation could be transformed into an opportunity, especially regarding the issue of academic mobility and teaching-learning process for foreign citizens.

The abovementioned determines *the aim of the present research* – to analyze the perspectives of digitalization in higher education with regard to the internationalization process represented by academic mobility and provision of educational services at HEIs to foreigners. As a consequence, the main key finding includes that digitalization of higher education is a 21st century higher education realia-driven intervention for internationalization that gives all HEIs students opportunities for global learning and engagement.

The *methodological basis of the research* is represented by data analysis obtained through examination of scientific works on international higher education, interculturalism, digitalization in higher education, national and institutional strategies for incorporation of international education into existing curricula. The method of scientific literature reviewing has been used to investigate scientific and pedagogical sources, reference books, information resources related to the concept of internationalization in higher education represented by academic mobility and foreign students' teaching-learning process. Empirical data are based on systematic content analysis of the information related to institutional internationalisation process provided by the official websites of Jagiellonian University (Krakow, the Republic of Poland) and Comenius University in Bratislava (Slovak Republic); as well as on analytical papers developed by experts of UNESCO, World Bank, OECD, etc. The validity of the obtained results is confirmed using various generally accepted and specific methods: theoretical generalization, abstraction, dialectical analysis, comparison and systematization, system approach.

Internationalization as a means to ensure student access and inclusion in global learning space. This part of the research presupposed the analysis of the internationalization process within higher education from the perspective of COVID-19 world crisis. As the result, the focus of attention shifted to “internationalization at home” paradigm, which is defined as “the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments” (Beelen & Jones, 2015, p. 69). Internationalization at home is also described as a “significant means of internationalizing higher education, looking beyond the mobility of a minority of students, emphasizing instead the delivery to all students of an internationally focused curriculum and the embedding of cultural communication in culturally diverse settings” (Wächter, 2003, p. 6). On the positive sides of this process there is possibility to shift international learning benchmarks from quantitative measurements (mobility) to qualitative measurements (what is learned). It implies not only accessibility of internationalized learning but inclusion of internationalized learning in higher education for all. It gives educators a tool to examine the purpose of higher education internationalization for student learning beyond market-driven imperatives (Ackers, 2008; Mudiamu, 2020). Educators see internationalization at home as a way to link diversity, sustainability and global citizenship; it is also seen as a way to intentionally integrate international students' knowledge and experience in the formal curriculum. In

terms of the community, internationalization at home engages students with “cultural others” in their local community and allows them to look at the effects of globalization, migration and diversity on campus and beyond (Agnew & Kahn, 2014; Almeida et al., 2019). With regard to the present research it is important how ensure the realization of internationalization of higher education on the home campus in order to make this process equitable for students. Thus, digitalization and online practices of HEIs become of utmost importance.

Digitalization and online presence. Digitalization lies at the centre of activities aimed at the development and expansion of HEIs in the given sector. The analytical surveys conducted during 2020 by UNESCO and OECD have shown, however, rather limited digitalization and a limited online presence of the most of HEIs in Eastern Europe. Although many have used electronic budgeting records, the majority does not possess clear-cut foreign language versions of their websites. Moreover, some have not been interested in online marketing and online educational activities, however, in many sectors, online issues have become a vital adaptation strategy. Advertising on social media is also becoming increasingly popular. Consequently, according to World Bank and OECD papers, taking into account the global trend of the digitalization of educational activities and the economic downturn caused by COVID-19, it is necessary to support HEIs in developing, launching and promoting more elaborated online platforms. It is also important to train the staff how to create digital advertisement and run promo campaigns on web and social media. Online presence is particularly relevant for niche sectors such as mobility and international research. Given the quarantine restrictions imposed in the countries and the subsequent suspension of educational exhibition and networking activities, it is also necessary to use online tools to connect the disrupted educational ties. This will help create a recognizable University brand and subsequently tap new markets.

It is as well advisable for HEIs to reflect on the design of online and blended courses consisting predominantly of the following: (1) focus on key stakeholders, which should imply selecting readings and assignments in consultation with employers, experts in field of respective area, and graduates of educational programme who are working in the field; establishing feedback loops to collect feedback on online content; (2) flow, which should ensure removing tasks / readings / assignments that do not add value; removing extra steps or assignments that are redundant or not current; ensuring that course lay out is clear and information flows to the student without interruption; (3) pull, which should imply selecting online class meeting times based on students’ demands; selecting online chat session times based on students’ demands; (4) Jidoka & Stop and Control Mistakes, which provides immediate feedback to students so students are able to correct mistakes; provides Just in Time feedback; (5) Separate human and machine work, which includes machine graded quizzes and saves time to grade student assignments that require in-depth understanding of the material; (6) Visual Control, which should include

visual diagrams for key assignments and a course calendar; (7) Kaizen – Continuous Improvement, which presupposes collecting feedbacks from employers, alumni, students and faculty to improve online course delivery, as well as regular course evaluations (at least 2-3 times during the semester); (8) Standardized Approach based on creating standardized course template for online courses to reduce variation (Emiliani, 2004).

Collaborative Online International Learning (COIL). As an up-to-date manifestation of internationalization process is collaborative online international learning, also referred to as globally networked learning and virtual exchange (Faculty Guide for Collaborative Online International Learning Course Development, 2020). It is a relatively new education paradigm promoting the development of academic mobility in virtual mode across campus-based international academic environment, based on Internet tools, E-pedagogies, and fostering exchanges between academic staff and students in geographically distant locations and from different linguacultural backgrounds. With the application of this teaching-and-learning technology courses are co-equal and team-taught by educators who collaborate to develop a shared syllabus that emphasizes experiential and collaborative student-centered learning. COIL technology allows for the creation of English-language educational offers using the HEIs Open learning system for international community; creation of English-language educational offers in cooperation with national and global educational platforms offering mass open online courses, etc. Thus, such institutional digitalization creates opportunities for individual learning trajectory through: (1) E-pedagogy techniques with the involvement of international academic partners; (2) international virtual exchange and virtual mobility projects; (3) combining virtual and physical mobility (Univerzita Komenského, 2021).

Among the forms and methods of collaborative online international learning one can distinguish an interview, round table, debate, application of dialogic situations, focus lists, structured solution of problem situation, questionnaires, pair annotation of the article, role play, case method, Jigsaw method (puzzle), etc. Thus, collaborative online international learning promotes critical thinking, ensures the formation of the ability to purposefully generate new ideas and skills for international cooperation, promotes self-realization and self-improvement, provides new opportunities for the formation of foreign language professional-oriented communication. Possessing a sense of global citizenship (World Economic Forum, 2020) is vital to enhance students' critical thinking skills – global awareness fosters accountability towards learning with “the other,” as well as to perform 21st century work. Therefore, global competency is both skill and attitude which must be cultivated as part of higher education, and here COIL becomes of utmost importance. The difference of the COIL course from a traditional online or distance learning course lies in the following: “A COIL course is specifically designed to link students who have different cultural and geophysical perspectives and experiences. A typical online course may include

students from different parts of the world; however, a COIL course engages students in learning course content both through their own unique cultural lens and also by exchanging their cultural and experiential lenses as they move through the learning material together. By helping students to reflect with each other, you and your partner instructor will be facilitating a cross-cultural dialogue that brings a global dimension to your course content” (Faculty Guide for Collaborative Online International Learning Course Development, 2020).

As *inter alia findings* of the present research a number of *key takeaways for HEIs and education policy makers* can be identified. Digitalization practices nowadays are university-driven inclusive global learning intervention for students in a domestic setting. Thus, universities should shift their internationalization efforts from *Education Abroad* concept to *Internationalization at Home* paradigm. Academic staff of the two HEIs participated in the present research reported a sense of leadership and innovation in teaching with respect to digitalized methods and principles of E-pedagogy on their campuses because such methods could benefit all of their students, irrespective of mobility (Uniwersytet Jagielloński, 2021; Univerzita Komenského, 2021). Digitalization in higher education, particularly COIL, provides the most accessible and inclusive way to deliver global learning for all students as part of their formal education. As Beelen and Jones (Beelen & Jones, 2015, p.68) argue, “while mobility can bring additional benefits to the global few, this should not be at the expense of internationalization for all”. Academic staff of the universities participated in the research believe that their international experiences and networks could have a profound impact on students global learning and intercultural skills development whether or not those students had experience of studying abroad. It is important to remember that education abroad was designed to deliver global learning, not to enable international travel.

Universities need to create sustainable infrastructure and dedicated support for faculty-led communities of practice around virtual exchange which also could help drive and inform the internationalization goals of the university. This shift would involve creating a collaborative support structure at the university for faculty at all stages of engagement with digitalization. Universities’ academic staff could be supported to contribute at virtual exchange conferences and build globally engaged networks. COIL practices could be used as part of or in addition to a traditional study abroad program, and several COIL/study abroad hybrids could be piloted to see if this model increases participation in study abroad. As predicted by some scholars (Rubin & Guth, 2015), mainstreaming digitalization means disruption of how global learning is conceived of and delivered at the university.

Academic staff should receive dedicated special training to be facilitators of global virtual teams in order for students to not only learn more effectively in teams, but to give students practice in skills they will need for 21st century work. In this research, HEIs’ teachers described this preparation in

terms of students learning how to work collaboratively and virtually in teams. A recommendation for practice is to ensure that digital mode of teaching-learning process, particularly COIL training workshops, for university teachers include best practices on how to help students work effectively in global virtual teams.

Students will need to show evidence of greater mastery of these 21st century skills, so a fourth recommendation is to create digital badging or micro-credentials that could be attached to a COIL course. Teachers agree that in 21st century life, students needed to have evidence of acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes to advance to the next stage of their learning or career. Therefore, practitioners should work with university departments to create a digital badging or micro-credential for students who take a COIL course. This would allow them to build their resumes through one COIL course or a series of COIL courses. These badges could identify development of soft skills such intercultural communication acquisition through working in a global virtual team. Furthermore, the badges could communicate more formal content knowledge acquisition such as COIL courses connected to the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals. This would help students curate the knowledge, skills and attitudes they have learned through COIL. The micro-credentialing or badging would also support university efforts to better prepare students for professional mobility. It would make showing evidence of intercultural competence and global learning accessible to all students.

These implications for practice highlight the importance of practitioners to support faculty agency in making global learning accessible and demonstrable for all students at the university, thus, substantiating the feasibility of applying the principles of digital pedagogy for the development of intercultural professional competencies and digital skills. Providing infrastructure for digitalization and providing knowledge and skills around internationalization for academic staff are the best way for practitioners to support student access and inclusion in global learning and engagement.

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Мигович І. В. Цифровізація у вищій освіті як засіб забезпечення доступу та інтегрування студентів до глобального освітнього простору в умовах світової кризи COVID-19

У статті здійснено аспектний аналіз концепту «цифровізація» та особливостей його функціонування у сфері вищої освіти як такого, що забезпечує всебічний доступ до глобального освітнього простору під час пандемії COVID-19. Окреслено взаємозв'язок понять «цифровізація», «інтернаціоналізація», «міжнародне колаборативне онлайн навчання»; останнє схарактеризовано як новітня освітня парадигма, що сприяє розвитку міжкультурної компетентності всіх учасників освітнього процесу у спільно створеному мультикультурному академічному середовищі. Емпіричний аналіз здійснено з урахуванням концептуальних засад поняття «інтернаціоналізація вдома», що утворює зв'язок міжнародного та міжкультурного вимірів, інтегрованих до формального, неформального та інформального навчання завдяки залученню Інтернет-інструментів та принципів дигітальної педагогіки. Аналіз здійснено відносно процесу інтернаціоналізації у галузі вищої освіти Польської та Словацької Республік, спираючись в якості емпіричних на дані, представлені у відкритому доступі на онлайн-платформах Ягелонського університету в Кракові, Польська Республіка, та Університету Я.А. Коменського в Братиславі, Словацька Республіка. Таким чином, дослідження спрямоване на окреслення теоретичних та методичних засад застосування основних принципів цифровізації у сучасній вищій освіті, акцентуючи при цьому ролі викладачів щодо промоції кампусного міжнародного академічного середовища.

Ключові слова: цифровізація освіти, міжкультурна освіта, інтернаціоналізація, інтернаціоналізація вдома, навчальна програма, міжнародне колаборативне онлайн навчання.

Мигович И. В. Цифровизация в высшем образовании как средство обеспечения доступа и интеграции студентов в глобальное образовательное пространство в условиях мирового кризиса COVID-19

В статье осуществлен аспектный анализ концепта «цифровизация» и особенностей его функционирования в сфере высшего образования как такового, что обеспечивает всесторонний доступ к глобальному образовательному пространству во время пандемии COVID-19. Очерчена взаимосвязь понятий «цифровизация», «интернационализация», «международное коллаборативное онлайн обучение»; последнее охарактеризовано как новая образовательная парадигма, которая способствует развитию межкультурной компетентности всех участников образовательного процесса в совместно созданной ими мультикультурной академической среде. Эмпирический анализ осуществлен с учетом концептуальных основ понятия «интернационализация дома», которое утверждает связь международного и межкультурного измерений, интегрированных в формальное, неформальное и информальное обучение благодаря привлечению Интернет-инструментов и принципов дигитальной педагогики. Анализ осуществлен относительно процесса интернационализации в высшем образовании Польской и Словацкой Республик, опираясь в качестве эмпирических на данные, представленные в открытом доступе на онлайн-платформах Ягеллонского университета в Кракове, Польская Республика, и Университета Я. А. Коменского в Братиславе, Словацкая Республика. Таким образом, исследование направлено на определение теоретических и методических основ применения основных принципов цифровизации в современном высшем образовании, акцентируя при этом роль преподавателей в промоции кампусной международной академической среды.

Ключевые слова: цифровизация образования, глобальное образование, интернационализация, интернационализация дома, учебная программа, международное коллаборативное онлайн обучение.

Myhovych I. Digitalization in Higher Education as a Means to Ensure Student Access and Inclusion in Global Learning Space with Regard to COVID-19 World Crisis

The article provides an aspect analysis of the concept «digitalization» and the peculiarities of its functioning in higher education as the one that provides comprehensive access to global educational space during the COVID-19 pandemic. During the research an attempt has been made to articulate the link between the notions of «digitalization», «internationalization», «collaborative online international learning» as a new educational paradigm enhancing intercultural competence of all actors of educational process within jointly established multicultural academic environment. The focus of empirical research is centred on the

«internationalization-at-home» paradigm, which is viewed as the nexus of international and intercultural dimensions integrated into formal, non-formal, and informal learning (learning environment) with the application of digital teaching formats such as E-pedagogy, international virtual exchange and virtual mobility projects, etc. The analysis has been conducted with regard to the internationalisation process at Polish and Slovak higher education based on the empirical data provided by online open platforms of Jagiellonian University in Krakow, the Republic of Poland, and Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovak Republic. As such, the research has been aimed at outlining theoretical and methodical basis for application of the basic digitalization process principles in present-day higher education with the emphasis on the roles of academic staff in promoting campus-based international academic environment.

Key words: digitalization of education, global education, internationalization, internationalization at home, curriculum, collaborative online international learning.

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