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RESILIENCE, DIGITAL PEDAGOGY AND THE TEACHING OF ENGLISH IN UKRAINIAN TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES DURING WARTIME

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine has dramatically reshaped the functioning of higher education institutions, forcing universities to rely on digital environments as the primary means for sustaining academic continuity [3]. For English language instruction, particularly in technical universities, this transition required not only a change of tools but also a reconsideration of pedagogical logic. The sudden shift towards remote and hybrid learning compelled instructors to work more flexibly, redesign course structures, and integrate technologies that allow students to continue learning despite displacement, unstable schedules, or disruptions caused by air raids. Digital platforms such as Moodle and Microsoft Teams became the backbone of this new educational ecosystem, enabling both access to learning materials and real-time communication under difficult and unpredictable circumstances [1].

One of the most urgent tasks for educators was to establish learning formats that remained stable even when students could not join classes synchronously. Asynchronous modules, prerecorded explanations, and clearly organized weekly units played a decisive role in helping learners progress at an individual pace. In many cases, such flexibility became essential, as students attended classes from shelters, temporary accommodation, or different regions of Ukraine and abroad. This experience reinforced the understanding that well-structured digital courses

are not merely a replacement for in-person teaching but a tool that can expand inclusivity and support continuity in times of crisis.

Communication in online settings required a different degree of attention. Without the nonverbal cues typical for classroom interaction, teachers had to adjust their instructions, provide more detailed scaffolding, and ensure regular feedback. Teams channels and chats served as micro-communities where students could clarify tasks, seek assistance, and stay connected to their group. Live sessions, although shorter and more focused, helped maintain the social dimension of language learning, which is vital for the development of communicative competence. Pair work, brief discussions, problem-solving tasks, and micro-presentations were adapted to the online format to preserve opportunities for meaningful interaction.

Psychological factors became an inseparable part of the pedagogical process. Many students experienced stress, relocation, uncertainty, or limited access to stable electricity. As a result, teaching English during wartime involved not only delivering linguistic content but also offering emotional stability through predictable course structure, clear expectations, and supportive communication. For some learners, English classes became an anchor of normality – a space where they could shift focus away from constant news and regain a sense of routine.

The rapid growth of digital literacy has been one of the significant outcomes of the transition to remote learning [2]. Both instructors and students had to become proficient with a wide range of tools: from online quizzes and multimedia resources to various forms of remote assessment. This led to the diversification of evaluation methods, including oral consultations, short video-based assignments, project portfolios, and collaborative tasks. Such formats often provided a more authentic representation of student performance, as they encouraged independent work and reduced opportunities for academic dishonesty. Moreover, these approaches mirrored the communication practices widely used in international professional contexts, which is particularly relevant for technical students.

Over time, many universities developed unified standards for online course design. Weekly modules, transparent assessment criteria, and uniform navigation principles contributed to reducing cognitive load and helping students manage stress more effectively. At the same time, digital environments expanded opportunities for motivation and self-directed learning. For many students, English became a gateway to international courses, remote internships, and professional resources that were now accessible regardless of geographic location. This shift supported not only academic development but also the long-term resilience of Ukrainian youth.

The reliance on online tools also highlighted persistent challenges. Technical limitations, electricity outages, varying levels of digital access, and emotional strain continue to influence students' performance. Nevertheless, the experience of wartime teaching revealed that the combination of remote and face-to-face learning can form a sustainable model for the future. For English language instruction, such a hybrid approach offers the advantages of flexibility, wider access to authentic materials, and the possibility of individualized learning trajectories. Digital platforms make it easier to integrate project-based tasks, interdisciplinary assignments, and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) content tailored to engineering and technology-related fields.

Despite the ongoing difficulties, the evolution of English language teaching in Ukraine demonstrates the remarkable adaptability of teachers and students. What began as an emergency response has developed into a more deliberate and technologically grounded pedagogical practice. The war has accelerated innovation in ways that might otherwise have taken a decade. The growing familiarity with digital tools will continue to influence course design, assessment methods, and approaches to learner support long after the return to more stable conditions.

In summary, the wartime experience of Ukrainian technical universities shows that digital technologies can uphold not only the continuity but also the quality of English language teaching when implemented thoughtfully. The integration of Moodle, Microsoft Teams, and other digital resources has reinforced the role of educators as facilitators, mentors, and designers of supportive learning environments. The lessons learned during this period highlight the importance of resilience, methodological flexibility, and student-centered approaches. These insights contribute to the broader global discourse on teaching in emergency contexts and demonstrate how technology can help sustain academic communities even during profound national challenges.

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