

# ATTITUDES OF FUTURE TEACHERS TOWARDS E-LEARNING – INSTRUMENTAL CASE STUDY

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**Abstract:** *Distance learning course Media in Education was carried out in the academic year 2012/2013 for full-time 61 students and 25 part-time students Polish Philology teaching specialties. Each student was required to put in the resources Power Point presentation and take one activity. It was treated as two hours of classes. Resources have been available to 17 students Library and Information Science, who were preparing to become teachers. Classes were held in a blended learning system, in addition to 10 hours of exercises for stationary cycle and 6 hours for part-time studies. Most undertaken were such activities as: forum, quiz, glossary of terms, rarely voting and chat. It turned out that the media competences are sufficient for students to participate in the e-course. Probably now some of them were able to conduct e-classes.*

**Keywords:** *Media in Education, Polish language teaching, prospective teachers, forum, e-course*

## INTRODUCTION: MEDIA IN EDUCATION OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS OF POLISH LANGUAGE ON PEDAGOGICAL UNIVERSITY IN CRACOW

It was the first distance learning course at the Institute of Polish Philology. It was possible, because in the academic year 2012/2013 at the University was launched MOODLE Platform. It was also the first e-course run by the author of this text.

Developed in 2007, the syllabus of the course *Media in Education* did not provide distance learning classes. They were scheduled in the audiovisual room with browsing network resources and creation of teaching materials by the teacher and students. Presentation by the teacher was supposed to provide instruction. However, presentations made by students were designed to serve the exchange of experience and dissemination of inventive use media capabilities for teaching.

## 1. RULES OF PROCEDURE AND PROGRAM OF THE COURSE

### 1.1 Rules of procedure

Students were informed that *the course allows them to get to know how the platform Moodle works (types of materials, possible activities), with which they can create content, take activities and conduct classes in a remote form, in order that didactic process may be effective* (Ślósarz 2013 II: 1). *Terms and conditions* contained formulations:

1. *The password is kept confidential (...).*
2. *The user profile should contain real data (...). Login should consist of letters and numbers because of security.*
3. *The Student must have access to the Internet and programs: for playing of media files and view „Adobe Acrobat” documents (...).*
4. *Course participant must also have access to Moodle Platform at Pedagogical University (...).*
5. *During the course, students can communicate synchronously (chat) and asynchronously (discussion forum, news).*
6. *We present only materials related to the course.*
7. *Entering false personal data, obstruction another person work, posting the offensive or obscene content will result in blocking the student's account. This behavior is governed by article. 141 of the „Code of offences” (Ślósarz 2013 I: 1).*

### 1.2 Program of the course

E-course *Media in Education* was prepared in January 2013, that is to say at the end of the winter semester of the academic year. Full-time students held necessary number of hours. Distance learning course was designed to familiarize them with this form of work and was to be complementary. In the case of part-time students substituted traditional two-hour classes. For students of Scientific Information and Library Science e-course *Media in Education* was the repository of examination materials (presentations of the lectures and readings), and the ability to observe the work of senior colleagues from second degree teaching specialization.

Student were asked to take two activities: insert into second module own presentation, based on a reading as the project of a lesson or series of classes and perform at least one task, chosen from the following modules:

- 1st. *Forum of Students Presentations.* Students have had possibility to put here their presentations. They could discuss their materials on the forum.
- 2nd. *Changes in Teacher Functions* related to psychosocial and technical skills needed to carry out distance learning. Students were asked to read indicated by the hyperlink text *Eve Lubina Function Changes of the Teacher in Teaching at a Distance* (Lubina 2004). Then they had to enter a post on the forum and name the three most important psychosocial

competences of the distance learning teacher, as well as sort out his skills from basic to the most complex (creative expert, the substantive knowledge, methodological knowledge, wisdom). It was also necessary to develop a didactic project that can be implemented using distance learning tools. Student also had to respond once to the post one of colleagues.

- 3rd. *Web Quest* – this method of teaching was presented in the specified hyperlink article by Mark Szafraniec *Web Quest as an Interactive Methods of Training Students and Adults at a Distance* (Szafraniec 2009). The student's task was reading this text and participating in chat room. It was necessary to replace developed by the Web Quest skills, to present components of instruction for students starting work this way and offer them topic to developing during the lesson or as the homework.
- 4th. *E-Didactic Tools* were related to teaching with use interactive whiteboard (Agrafcompol 2010), Mind Maps (Baj), the Hot Potatoes (Filmy Szkoleniowe [Training Films] 2012), the establishment of a blog (Ms Anna Kostro 2011) and the need of the use of electronic tools in the work of the teacher (Levyznin 2010). After seeing the material the student had to take part in the vote on the usefulness of these tools.
- 5th. *Resources of Portal "Scholaris"* have focused the attention of students on the designated hyperlink educational portal and various its features, especially connected with Polish Language teaching. The student's task was to examine its resources and functions, and to propose the use of its in education. The statement on this subject had to be sent to the discussing forum.
- 6th. *Polish Language Applications* include a variety of programs to help organize the process of distance learning. Students task was to read hyperlinked list *Guide to Web 2.0 applications in education* ("E-Mentor" 2013). The Student had to choose two of them, and formulate their own didactic proposal, based on them and connected with obligatory reading.
- 7th. *Tutorial to Conducting Distance Learning* referred to tutorials for leading e-courses posted on the university platform. The students' task was to send on the forum a post with the description of the steps that you must perform to create a course. It was also necessary to specify the skills of the Polish language teacher, who lead distance learning.
- 8th. *Television Glossary of Post-Modern Polish Language Teacher* included done by two student presentation, based on the book by Wieslaw Godzic (Godzic 2004). The student's task was to formulate a post for glossary as a definition of the term, a description of the phenomenon, teacher reflection, observations, technical notes, personal thoughts, using names of channels, programs, names of presenters and celebrities, etc. Passwords were automatically signed by the student's first and last name, and the other students had possibility to comment on it.

- 9th. *The List of Sources Useful Teacher for Distance Learning* referred to 62 print and online texts, relating to various aspects of distance learning. The student's task was to choose the five most useful teacher to e-course and justification of choice provided in the forum post.
- 10th. *Audioididactics in Polish Language Teaching* – it was referencing to the material contained on the portal by Lechoslaw Hojnacki (Hojnacki 2013). Student had the task to solve the quiz. He had two approaches, there were an average rating.
- 11th. *American Courses of Distance Learning* – this module contained a hyperlink to more than two thousand courses provided by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The Student needs to watch two, conducted in whole on-line. They were indicated by hyperlinks and focused on education. The student's task was to comment on the forum about their suitability for Polish language teacher or the ability to inspire him.
- 12th. *Didactic proposal of Student: "The Doll" – Dialogue with Contemporaneity* contained developed by student Maria Szumera project of contemporary interpretation of the novel *The Doll [Lalka]* by Bolesław Prus. Students were invited to express their opinion and to present similar didactic proposals.
- 13th. *We Evaluate this Course* was the space in which the student had possibility to assess the didactic suitability and substantive quality of the course. It was possible to speak at the forum or fill out a survey.
- 14th. *Exam Materials for INiB [SlaLS] Students* included examination issues and presentations made by the authoress of the course and students of Scientific Information and Library Science. They have had possibility to view all materials and also to communicate in forum placed in this module.
- 15th. *Internet Café "Under the Golden Androids"* included a forum to discuss topics not related to the course.

## 2. MULTIMEDIA RESOURCES AS DIDACTIC MATERIALS

### 2.1. Multimedia means

The course included text materials collected in 15 modules. They include: 24 PDF documents (including 18 made by students), 9 Power Point presentations made also by students. Hyperlinks were directed to three PDF documents, to three portals, to one open e-course, to four videos, to seven tutorials and to one Flash presentation.

So rich resources were formed with the involvement of students. They were collected over time. At the start of the course for full-time students was prepared 9 modules. For part-time students have been added modules 4, 10-12, 14-15.

### 2.2. Multimedia tools

The course includes 13 discussion forums, chat, glossary, quiz, one voting, one survey. The leading used also *The News Forum*. She posted in it 5 posts. They were related to organizational problems, evaluation and operation of the course.

Some students had technical problems with entering of the posts. They carelessly read instructions. Not everyone knew that a post can be edited only by 30 minutes, so some posts were unfinished. Students asked leading to delete it and re-edited entries. The interest in the various forums is presented below.

**Table 1.**

**Percentage distribution posts in discussion forums and average ratings**

Name of discussion forum	Number of entries	% of entries	Average rating
<i>Changes in Teacher Functions</i>	90	56.25	7.15
<i>Forum of Students Presentations</i>	44	27.05	7.36
<i>The List of Useful Sources for Distance Learning Teacher</i>	12	7.5	9.14
<i>We Evaluate this Course</i>	9	5.6	-
<i>Didactic proposal of Students: "The Doll" – Dialogue with Contemporaneity</i>	3	1.87	9.50
<i>Polish Language Applications</i>	1	0.6	4
<i>American Courses of Distance Learning</i>	1	0.6	3
<i>E-Didactic Tools</i>	0	0	
<i>Tutorial to Conducting Distance Learning</i>	0	0	
<i>Resources of Portal "Scholaris"</i>	0	0	
<i>Exam Materials for INiB [SIaLS] Students</i>	0	0	
<i>Internet Café "Under the Golden Androids"</i>	0	0	

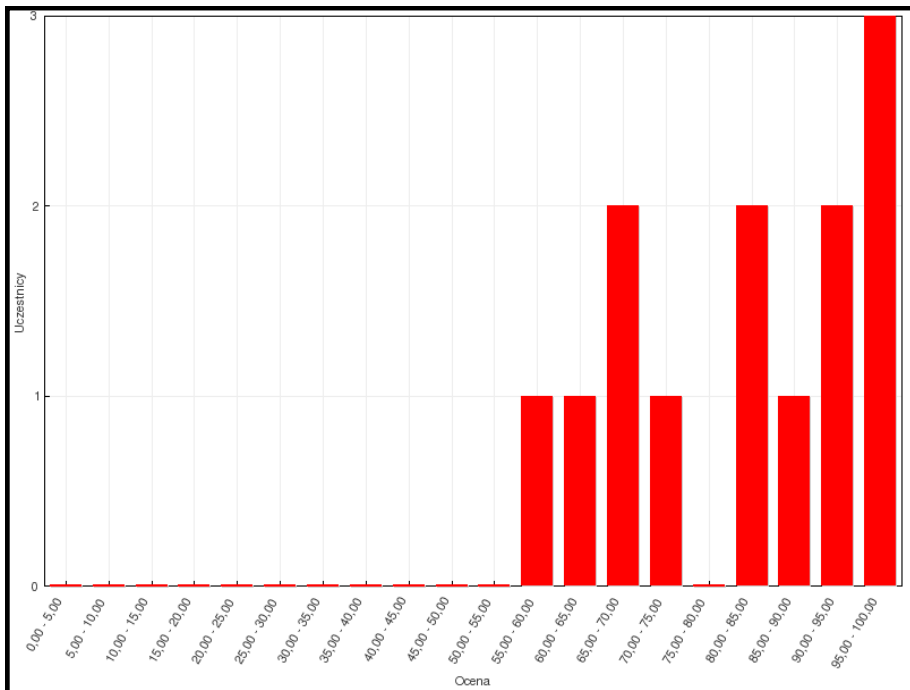
*Source: own elaboration*

Most of the posts were placed in the forum about how to change the function of the teacher in teaching at a distance, because it turned out, that this topic is crucial. Interest in *Forum of Students Presentation* resulted from the fact that it was obligatory. Presentations were made in groups, so their number (9) is smaller than the number of participants. Other forums had attracted moderate interest. In the dictionary were developed 24 concepts. But only one person participate in the vote, no one did participate in the chat room (they were not scored). This shows the pragmatic-minded students, who were seeking the fastest forms of assessment.

### 3. QUALITY OF ASSESSMENT

Course *Media in Education* according to syllabus ended without ratings. Student's activity in the course, however, was assessed in different ways. Forum posts and concepts contained in the dictionary were discussed by the teacher and students, and rated on a scale of 0-10 p. Student received max. 8 points for the substantive value of the task, and the other two for the manner of their presentation (using of technical functionality – especially hyperlinks and graphics, technical resourcefulness, clarity, correctness of the language). Quiz was evaluated automatically with an accuracy of two decimal places on a scale of 0-100%. To pass the module it was necessary to get at least 8.5 points. So conditions to pass the course was: posting the presentation and correct solution of a task or correct editing of the post. Part-time students have had the opportunity to work instead absence. Performing any one activity meant the execution one hour of the classes.

Quiz consisted of 6 questions. 15 students solved them in 27 attempts (3 were allowed). Average rating stood at 77.72%.



**Figure 1. Results of quiz *Audioididactics in Polish Language Teaching***

Source: Anna Ślósarz *Media in Education*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Anna Ślósarz Bar graph of the number of students results in different numerical ranges, available at <http://moodle.up.krakow.pl/mod/quiz/report.php?id=4308&mode=overview&attemptsmode=0&qmfilter=0&reg radefilter=0>, (accessed on 30 July 2013) [In Polish]

The critical incident turned out to be a student question. She asked why different answers to the same question are considered to be correct during the following approaches to the quiz? It turned out that this was due to the effects of ratings rounding, in this case, 75% (Partially Correct) to an integer in order to obtain greater transparency on the scoreboard. This resulted in a equalization 75% and 100% rate. In summing up of the results the system showed accurate values, which gave rise to further doubts of students. Introducing two decimal places lead to the system displays the *Mark 0.75 of 1*, and *Mark 0.05 of 1* etc.

Teacher was unable to set automatic aggregation of ratings. Completion of the course was established on the basis of the grade book or even post displayed on the screen or printed and analyzing them in the presence of the author. Sometimes student placed the post on forum just before coming on call duty of teacher. It was due to the fact that the task execution dates have not been set.

## **6. CULTURAL, SOCIAL AND LEGAL ASPECTS OF THE COURSE**

The course not mobilized all students to take an interest in new technologies in the area of the teaching of Polish language and literature. 10 students did not participate in it, even though they logged in and were co-authors of the presentation. Some of these presentations were shown during classes, but were not included in the course. Two students were not logged. Therefore, not all students completed the course on time.

### **6.1. Psychological aspect of the course**

The course was treated as a kind of test. Students were aware that their entries will be on the University Platform. That's why they tried to carefully form language and to be kind towards others. Posts have'nt spelling mistakes or major defects language.

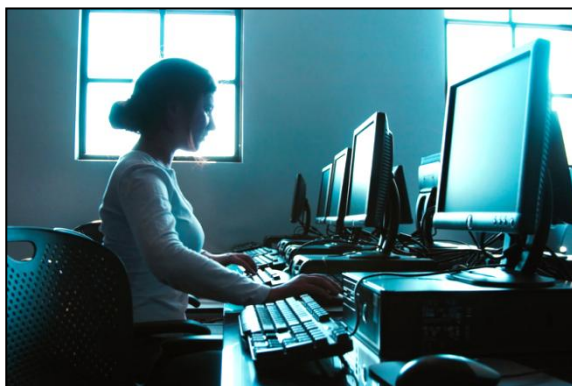
### **6.2. Teacher-student and student-student relationships**

Mutual student relationships were very kind. Ideas of colleagues were praised. However, there have been no polemic or discussion longer than 8 posts in the thread. Most popular was about *The Doll*. Developed 17-21 January. However, after a proposal from the leading to make the contemporary contexts of discussion today, break up, and the last entry appeared only on 30 January 2013. It was a critical incident. It revealed that lead's presence in the discussion may inhibit it. This is especially true when the course is highly formalized due to the short duration.

An evaluation survey filled more than a dozen full-time students and three part-time. All positive and highly evaluated the course. The most interesting for students was the search tools useful in e-learning, presentations and opinions of colleagues, preparation own comments. Some students found login process as too complicated in their opinion. Other were surprised by the numerous statements by other students (e.g. one student in 7 different modules).

### 6.3. Iconography in the service of teaching

Teacher inserted a photo showing a woman working at a computer. It was copied from the public Microsoft Office resources and placed as invitation of students to be active. The photograph reminded a university laboratory, where classes were held in the traditional form. But students have then access to the Internet and the ability to view and use the mentioned tools and resources. The choice of photograph decided also hairstyle of the woman, similar to used by the teacher.



**Figure 2. Image from the course *Media in Education***

*Source: "Microsoft Office"*<sup>2</sup>

However, students rarely posted graphics in their verbal texts and presentations. They do not use them, even when proposed classes about Stanislaw Ignacy Witkiewicz<sup>3</sup> or contexts with graphics, film, music, sightseeing<sup>4</sup>. That's why teacher twelve times demanded them. Twice she explained how to insert graphics and posted them in her posts. Twice she asked not to insert images with watermark. She drew attention to the bad copy, and improper downloading graphics by students resulting in improper display of the image. 21 times she asked to insert hyperlinks to graphics or to activate hyperlinks. These requests were not always met.

Graphics inserted by students usually reflected dominant in the MSM point of view. The students did not realize their ideological character. Succumbed to the iconic violence. They mistook vintage photographs with contemporary. They have forgotten about providing sources<sup>5</sup>. Few have been able to use free resources and integrate them with their own messages.

<sup>2</sup> „Microsoft Office” *Woman working with computer* available at <http://office.microsoft.com/pl-pl/images/results.aspx?qu=edukacja&ex=1#ai:MP900442309> (a Open Source license), (accessed on 29 August 2013).

<sup>3</sup> I. Pawlusiak *Exploration of Witkacy* available at <http://moodle.up.krakow.pl/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=118>, (accessed on 30 August 2013).

<sup>4</sup> E. Goczał *Crossing the Cinnamon Shops – an Introduction to the Work of Bruno Schulz* available at <http://moodle.up.krakow.pl/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=146>, (accessed on 30 August 2013).

<sup>5</sup> A. Kuźma *The Situation of the Jews in World War II* available at <http://moodle.up.krakow.pl/mod/forum/discuss.php?d=360>, (accessed on 30 August 2013).





**Figure 2. Functional graphics of course *Media in Education***

*Source: A. Kuźma, M. Krzyżak, A. Wszeborowska "TV After Big Brother"<sup>6</sup>*

## **CONCLUSION: SUCCESSFUL EXAMPLE OF E-LEARNING OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS**

Computer training and distance learning are important for prospective teachers of Polish Language. The course allowed for an exchange of views, mobilize to the activity and develop key competences of students, especially digital competence, social and civic competences, communication in the mother tongue and in English.

The teacher can present his own opinion about ideas of students. Mobilize students to discussion. Students learned ways to create and share resources well how to take activity in the course. They became convinced to use distance learning in their own teaching practice.

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