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## **REMOTE ENGLISH TEACHING IN UKRAINE: CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVEMENTS**

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The goal of any modern teacher is to facilitate students' journey to becoming life-long learners and global citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As digital natives, generations Z and Alfa feel like fish in the water with online learning as most of their life they spend online now. But for most teachers, online education has become a severe trial during the coronavirus pandemic. They felt unprepared for online teaching, especially those who have never had the opportunity to teach online beforehand. Working remotely was a new experience for them without theoretical preparation and technical provision and support. They were not competent and confident in the online educational platforms, features, and benefits. As A. Collins and R. Halverson confirm, "there are deep incompatibilities between the demands of the new technologies and the traditional school. Technology makes life more difficult for teachers. It requires new skills teachers have often not learned in their professional development." [1]. And the quality of teaching depends on how confident you feel using technologies and what you want your students to achieve because "well-planned online learning experiences are meaningfully different from courses offered online in response to a crisis or disaster." [2]. For longer-term learning goals like language learning, which involve the development of knowledge and skills over time, online learning requires structure, support, interaction, and teacher's experience and competence.

So, what has been done and provided since the lockdown started for Ukrainian teachers? Beginning in March 2020, there have been organized and performed many educational and methodological webinars and training for teachers, giving knowledge and practical instructions on how to teach with the help of different online platforms by local educational institutions such as Osvitioriia, Vseosvita, etc., British Council and representatives of foreign publishing houses (Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, Pearson, Macmillan, and others). For school learners, there were online lessons on TV provided by experienced teachers at the designated time and following the educational program for a specific grade. Also, educators have learned on their own how to teach online by surfing the Internet for tutorials. Simultaneously, they have started sharing learning content using the digital technologies with which they and their students have become acquainted.

Ukrainian English teachers' most popular online lesson platforms have become Zoom, Skype, Google Meet, and WebEx for synchronous teaching involving live lessons with students. To assess students' homework or skills they developed, teachers also have used asynchronous education where they have created tasks to supplement a coursebook or to meet the requirements of teaching online in Google Class, Moodle, or on other learning platforms and set up the time it has to be done or download documents with tasks. This can make it easier for teachers to monitor and provide feedback on students' work than when tasks are submitted via multiple channels. The online practice is a supplementary digital component of any English course provided by Oxford University Press, Pearson, Macmillan, and others for asynchronous learning. Online Practice is

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integrated with the course book content and develops all necessary skills for language learning, such as listening, reading, speaking, and writing. Also, it has such options as tracking (user's progress and grade book), class tools (planner, dropbox, tests, class list, checklist, groups), and ways of communication (discussions, messages, chat, and survey). Teachers can create classes for students to join, quickly and easily set extra tasks, and track their students' progress. The teacher's resource center contains materials including worksheets, video and audio, and some methodological tips.

The advantages of online practice are: these are course-integrated activities for students' independent learning with an automatic marking which is stored in their grade books on the platform for the course; teacher's control in a class report that has average scores, first/last attempts and shows students' answers; development of all necessary language skills; skill report for students explains which language skill they need to improve, giving them self-motivation guidance; skills label activities, so the teacher can easily and quickly target problem areas or individual preferences.

As teachers' survey showed, they were astonished by the results, opportunities, and possibilities online practice had given them and their students and had only one warning to lose students' interests and motivations when they come back to classes as they were not provided with all necessary digital tools for the effective and up-to-date teaching at school.

All English teachers who have been using Oxford University Press course books were provided with time-bound Classroom Presentation Tools for each level of their course and could download free Teachers' Guides on [www.elt.oup.com](http://www.elt.oup.com), which were beneficial tools for synchronous teaching in accordance with their lessons plans without losing the interaction. Lessons run smoothly online with live e-books where students have the opportunity to read texts, type and check answers, listen to audio exercises, and watch videos.

Moreover, they could find plenty of information concerning online teaching and resources for their online lessons on the Teacher's resource center and on the official website of Oxford University Press, which created special pages for distance teaching (for teachers) and learning (for students and parents).

The most challenging for all teachers was the assessment of their students. And online practice also could help teachers sort out these issues because, after every unit, there is a Unit review in the form of a test with automatic assessment. There isn't a single 'correct' way to teach online. How you teach online depends on your context and what technologies you and your students have available. It also depends on how confident you feel using these technologies and what you want your students to achieve.

**To sum up**, we can prove that there are many ways English teachers can teach online. To add interest to your lessons and motivate your students, we have to try to use a variety of asynchronous and synchronous approaches and various tools and activity types. However, the key is to choose the methods and tools that best suit you, your students, and your context. As teachers, we already have many skills and strategies that everyone can bring to teaching online, whatever digital tools one chooses (or is asked) to use. And when the war started in Ukraine, people got stressed, desperate and severe conditions for living, but at least teachers had the background of teaching online and the resources they needed for that process. That helped them finish the academic year with their learners successfully.

### References:

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