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PROBLEMS OF ONLINE TRAINING OF FUTURE PSYCHOLOGISTS AND WAYS TO SUBMIT THEM

The article is devoted to the analysis of the problems of online training of future psychologists, which arose during the forced transition of higher education institutions to online training during the COVID-19 epidemic and developed during full-scale military operations. Purpose: to identify the problems of online learning in the training of future psychologists, to consider and summarize ways to overcome them. Methodology: to study the problem of online training, the following methods were used: theoretical analysis of modern scientific literature, observation and questionnaire. Scientific novelty: the article for the first time identifies, summarizes and analyzes the specifics of psychological problems in the organization of online training of future psychologists. It is noted that the main feature of the training of future psychologists is the impossibility of considering methodological problems of training in isolation from the problems of providing psychological assistance. A survey conducted by the authors among psychology students of the first, bachelor's level of study showed that among the most important problems for them, students noted: complication of communication with teachers and classmates; time management problems; increased amount of independent work; problems with technology; decreased motivation to learn, difficult psychological state. The analysis of teaching activities revealed problems with: increased anxiety, attention span, the need to combine the functions of a teacher and a human operator; the peculiarities of planning and conducting online classes, high levels of emotional stress and increased emotionality of communication participants, readiness to provide psychological assistance, "digital tolerance" and taking into account the specifics of teaching in conditions of a wide geographical dispersion of applicants. It has demonstrated that the emergence of a significant number of psychological problems is closely related to the technical aspects of the organization of the educational process, the level of its material and software support, and the specific psychological conditions of its implementation. The article presents empirically developed methods of overcoming these problems for both students and teachers during online classes for the training of future psychologists. Conclusions. The results of the theoretical analysis and practical research have shown that the successful or unsuccessful transition to online training of future psychologists is associated with the technical aspects of the educational process organization, the level of its material support and the specific psychological conditions of its implementation.

Key words: online training, problems of online training, higher education institution, students, future psychologists.

Людмила Цибух, Андрій Гусєв, Людмила Бадюл. ПРОБЛЕМИ ОНЛАЙН НАВЧАННЯ МАЙБУТНІХ ПСИХОЛОГІВ ТА СПОСОБИ ЇХ ПОДОЛАННЯ

Стаття присвячена аналізу проблем онлайн навчання майбутніх психологів, які виникли при вимушеному переході закладів вищої освіти до онлайн навчання під час епідемії COVID-19 та отримали свій розвиток під час повномасштабних воєнних дій. Мета роботи: виявити проблеми онлайн навчання у підготовці майбутніх психологів, розглянути та узагальнити шляхи їх подолання. Методологія: з метою дослідження проблеми онлайн навчання, використано методи: теоретичного аналізу сучасної наукової літератури, метод спостереження та анкетування. Наукова новизна: у статті вперше виявлена, узагальнена та проаналізована специфіка виникнення психологічних проблем при організації онлайн навчання майбутніх психологів. Зроблено наголос на вимушеному характері переходу на онлайн навчання в зв'язку з початком пандемії. Зазначається, що основною особливістю навчання майбутніх психологів є неможливість розгляду методичних проблем навчання у відриві від проблем надання психологічної допомоги. Проведене авторами опитування серед студентів-психологів першого, бакалаврського рівня навчання показало, що серед найбільш значущих для себе проблем, студенти відмічають: ускладнення комунікації з викладачами та одногрупниками; проблеми тайм-менеджменту; збільшення обсягу самостійної роботи; проблеми з технологіями; зниження загальної мотивації до навчання, складний психологічний стан. Аналіз викладацької діяльності виявив наявність проблем з: підвищенням рівня тривожності, розподілом уваги, необхідністю поєднання функцій викладача і людини-оператора, особливостями планування та проведення онлайн занять, високим рівнем емоційного напруження та підвищеною емоційністю учас-

ників комунікації, готовністю до надання психологічної допомоги, «цифровою толерантністю» та урахуванням специфіки викладання в умовах широкого географічного розкиду здобувачів. Продемонстровано що виникнення значною кількістю психологічних проблем тісно пов'язане з технічними аспектами організації навчального процесу, рівнем його матеріального та програмного забезпечення, та специфічними психологічними умовами його реалізації. У статті наводяться емпірично напрацьовані прийоми подолання зазначених проблем як у студентів так і у викладачів під час проведення онлайн занять з підготовки майбутніх психологів. Висновки. Результати проведеного теоретичний аналізу та практичного дослідження показали, що успішний або неуспішний перехід на онлайн навчання майбутніх психологів пов'язаний з технічними аспектами організації навчального процесу, рівнем його матеріального забезпечення та специфічними психологічними умовами його реалізації.

Ключові слова: онлайн навчання, проблеми онлайн навчання, вищий навчальний заклад, студенти, майбутні психологи.

Introduction. The full-scale war has complicated and delayed the full comprehension of the experience gained during the COVID-19 quarantine for a long time. At the same time, it was the experience gained during almost two years of online operation that helped the education system to withstand all the stresses and resist the challenge of potential disorganization and destruction during the brutal test of war.

To fully analyze the ways to overcome the large-scale problems that have arisen, it is necessary to describe the “problem field” that emerged during the massive transition to online and to fix those problem solving options that have allowed and are allowing to overcome the appeared difficulties.

Degree of problem elaboration. It should be noted that attempts to comprehend the new reality of learning began almost from the start of the massive transition to online education. Crisis times have led to a small number of publications on the problem of transition to online learning. A few months after the start of the quarantine, a series of publications by educators and politicians of various levels were published, highlighting the problematic issues identified by the quarantine in the higher and secondary education system.

For example, Inna Sovsun's article identifies the following six problems in Ukrainian higher education that quarantine has revealed: digital skills, teaching methods, workload and teachers, academic integrity, autonomy of higher education institutions, and gender equality [9].

In the field of school education, the Ministry of Education has carried out significant analytical and methodological work to ensure online teaching of school courses.

There are works devoted to the development of the future psychologists' professional thinking in the process of preparing to work with deviant teenagers in distance learning [7]; research using SWOT-analysis of psychological and pedagogical factors of the effectiveness of psychologists' distance learning in a pandemic [10]; the use of distance learning technologies in conducting practical classes in psychological disciplines at a technical university [1]; the peculiarities of the distance learning impact on the psyche of the student and teacher [8]; disclosure of the “dis-

tance learning” concept, its challenges in quarantine, and Internet platforms [3], etc. It should be emphasized that most of the above publications are pedagogical.

In several publications, researchers' attention has been drawn to the psychological problems that have arisen in connection with the transition to offline training. Thus, in their studies, Malaysian scientists Tandeveria I., Ghani N. and Nasir M. [11] note that online training can act as a factor of additional anxiety for applicants. Among the main problems of online training, O. P. Luchaninova identifies insufficient technical equipment of higher education institutions, psychological unreadiness of teachers of pre-retirement age to actively use distance training methods, and the absence of some students during classes. But the most significant, according to the author, are the problems with the education and socialization of higher education students [6]. Pitulei V. V. studies the peculiarities of the impact of distance learning on the student's and the teacher's psyche [8]. Krupnyk I. R., Babatina S. I. and Krupnyk G. A. also emphasize in their study the importance of higher education students' psychological state in online learning. The study showed that the respondents' positive emotional state prevails, as online learning allows them to use all the advantages of studying at home. The authors also note that negative emotions during online learning are mainly related to technical difficulties of training [4]. Thus, on the one hand, partial coverage of psychological issues does not correspond to the real scale of the problems that all participants in the educational process have encountered due to the forced transition to online education, on the other hand, the training of future psychologists is a special component of this problem, which has not yet been adequately reflected in existing studies.

The purpose of the study: is to analyze the problems that arose during the forced transition to online education in the training of future psychologists and to summarize ways to overcome them.

Main content. In recent years, online learning has become predominant in Ukraine's education system. Long-term online learning in the training of any specialists originally arose in quarantine. At the same time, it should be noted the untested nature of the introduction of such a train-

ing format, which in itself is an important factor that caused significant psychological resistance among most teachers and students. Further, online learning was continued due to the full-scale war in Ukraine.

Thus, the use of online learning is characterized by a lack of choice, i.e. the forced nature of the transition to the online format for both students and teachers. And if earlier the choice of such a learning format was a conscious and voluntary matter, with the onset of quarantine, the issue of “voluntariness” has actually come down to the alternative of working/studying in this format or not working at all.

If earlier distance learning was considered as one of the possible formats for organizing the educational process, the main advantages of which were considered to be the provision of an asynchronous learning mode, the development of individual learning paths, and the almost unlimited possibility to expand the geographical scope of interaction between the teacher and the student, then with the beginning of quarantine, all forms of education (full-time, part-time, distance, and their combinations) were actually transferred to the online format.

The main feature of the future psychologists' training is the impossibility to consider methodological problems of training in isolation from the problems of providing psychological assistance. That is why we believe it is important to recall that the problem of the online format of providing assistance and training in this area was the subject of tough discussions in most professional communities of psychologists and psychotherapists back in the “pre-covid” times. There are two components to this debate: disputes about the possibility and effectiveness of online training for representatives of these specialties, and discussions about the effectiveness of providing individual and group psychological assistance, conducting group sessions, etc.

Particularly lengthy and fundamental discussions about the effectiveness of providing psychological assistance in an online format took place in communities of representatives of various areas of psychoanalytic psychotherapy. But the hopelessness of the quarantine situation led the International Psychoanalytic Association (IPA) to publish “Guidelines for Psychoanalysts on the Use of Video Conferencing in Their Practice” [12] in mid-March 2020, in which it legalized and recommended the online format of therapy. These recommendations and a series of appeals from authoritative representatives of various psychotherapeutic fields (Frank Yeomans, Danny Panitz, Bernard Cervé, Kenneth Wright, and others) seem to have put a final point

in this longstanding debate. It should be noted that legalization was of great importance for removing the final barriers to the development of online counseling, which in our country became especially important with the outbreak of a full-scale war, when several million Ukrainians were forced to leave their homes and move to other areas and countries. It was the online format that made it possible to continue receiving help from those psychologists with whom work had already begun and to quickly find Ukrainian-speaking specialists who could provide assistance.

At the same time, a significant number of students found themselves in a situation of insufficient technical support to do qualitatively online tasks in asynchronous mode. In addition, in the spring of 2022 significant problems arose with the quality of communication and access to the Internet for both those who were in the war zone and those who were forced to settle in various shelters and dormitories for refugees abroad. All this, as well as the blackout in the winter of 2022–2023 in Ukraine, caused significant difficulties in conducting online lessons.

Summarizing the results of the study of scientific works on the problem of online learning in higher education institutions [4; 5; 6; 11 etc.] and analyzing our own experience of conducting online lessons, we have identified the shortcomings that arise in the process of students' professional training in distance learning:

- dependence on the availability of appropriate material and technical base;
- insufficient computer literacy level of both students and teachers;
- psychological barriers of the subjects of the educational process;
- psychological unpreparedness of students for independent work (failure to meet deadlines in completing tasks, increase in the proportion of non-author's material in completed assignments);
- identifying and taking into account the peculiarities of perceptual processes in humans when working with computers (“saturation effect”), etc.

In order to determine what problems students see in online learning we conducted a survey among future psychologists, which involved 92 students of 1–4 years of study at three higher education institutions: University of Educational Management, NAES of Ukraine, State University of Intellectual Technologies and Communications, and Odesa National Economic University. The survey showed that among the most significant problems for them, students noted:

- communication with teachers and classmates (lack of personal communication, lack of feedback from teachers, feeling of unity with the

group due to lack of visual contact (black windows) during classes) – 54% of respondents;

– time management (difficulty prioritizing work, focusing on the class when you are not in the classroom) – 36%;

– increase in independent work (problems with the Internet, interruption of lectures due to air raid alarms lead to an increase in the amount of students' independent work) – 25%;

– problems with technology (there is not always Internet access, if there is no computer, it is not always convenient to work from a phone) – 20%;

– decreased motivation to study (due to the increased amount of independent work, loss of the “competition spirit” with classmates, motivation to study decreases) – 20% of students.

Thus, as the above analysis shows, technical barriers are an important problem in online learning for both teachers and students. Insufficient knowledge, and often familiarity and learning “from scratch”, of various online platforms and applications has led to increased anxiety among both teachers and students.

In addition, with the outbreak of war, the psychological component of online training began to include such unusual components as elements of emergency psychological care, the use of techniques to normalize the psychological state of students, potential exposure to acute emotional reactions associated with actual traumatic experiences, and other features that significantly increased the psychological burden on teachers and added special value to the synchronous mode of online classes [2].

While conducting online classes, we faced the problem of distributing the teacher's attention. After all, the instructor has to not only conduct the class and concentrate on teaching the material and group dynamics, but also has to do the work of switching between different applications, providing links, organizing and seating participants, turning on screen sharing, helping with presentations, showing his/her own presentation, or the necessary images. In fact, higher education teachers have faced challenges from the problematic field of engineering psychology related to the need to combine the functions of a teacher and a human operator: a new distribution of attention, specific conditions for conducting and planning classes, a different distribution of class time, an increase in the overall level of uncertainty of the learning situation due to the emergence of fully or partially uncontrollable factors – power supply, quality of Internet connection, possible hardware or software failures. Partial solution of these problems (especially at the beginning of the online course) was to dele-

gate “operator” powers to students who would be responsible for demonstrating the presentations; to use students' self-organization to prioritize answers and to provide a list of links on the learning platform in advance. In general, the presence of these problems has led to a significant increase in teachers' motivation to additionally master the competencies necessary for the successful conduct of the class: computer and platform skills. In order to overcome this problem, most higher education institutions have offered courses to help mastering the platform on which classes are held.

The online training also revealed problems of communication with students, both during classes and consultations, coordination, and information, associated with a high level of emotional stress and increased emotionality of the participants in the communication.

Taking these problems into account, we tried to create a supportive atmosphere during the classes, were polite, constantly addressed the students, trying to find out their point of view on a particular problem, answered questions that students had, and provided feedback on their work during the lesson. The students were also informed that they could contact the teacher individually if necessary to get the needed clarifications or psychological support/assistance.

As the results of online learning showed, the techniques and methods used by university teachers during face-to-face classes did not guarantee a successful lesson during online learning. It was necessary to look for new ways to keep the attention of higher education students, to master new skills of working with groups online.

To solve this problem we used presentations, subgroup work, introduced elements of competition, and made lectures and practical classes more dynamic, which aroused interest and prevented students from being distracted from the lessons.

For many teachers one of the main problems was the problem of “dark windows” instead of students' faces. The results of the students' survey revealed that the main reasons for disabling the cameras were: unwillingness to show their own home and themselves in a “homey” look, doing several things at once, periodic absence of students in front of the monitor, and trying to avoid communication with the teacher in case of poor preparation for the class.

We solved this problem by warning students that the working camera was a prerequisite (if there were technical problems, the student had to warn about them and be active by answering questions directly using the microphone or by answering in the chat), using surveys, test-

ing, group discussions, and subgrouping during classes. Gradually, the students got used to the idea that the camera was not only a sign of respect for the teacher and classmates, but also a necessary element of learning interaction. As a result of the work done, the number of “dark windows” has significantly decreased.

During online learning, we also faced the problem of preparing and planning lectures and practical classes related to the technical capabilities of specific gadgets. When planning classes and applying specific forms of work, we have to take into account and calculate what kind of gadgets students have. After all, a significant role in online learning is played by the ability to use a particular application on a particular gadget, and the availability of a sufficient number of necessary gadgets in the study group to organize work in small groups – when a sufficient number of participants have computers to perform tasks using applications such as, for example, a jam-board.

With the beginning of full-scale aggression an additional factor in planning classes was the fact that students were in different countries, on different continents, and, accordingly, in different time zones that can significantly affect the physical condition of particular students and their ability to work. One of the solutions to these problems was the availability of class recordings, which made it possible to review them at a time convenient for the student.

“Digital tolerance” was of particular importance during the classes, i.e., a tolerant attitude to delays caused by possible technical problems with communication or failures in the teacher's performance of camera work, which is typical when learning new communication platforms. It had to be introduced in the rules for conducting classes.

Taking into account that students have noted a decrease in motivation to study as one of the problems with online learning, we began to use the following interactive tools during classes to engage students:

- group projects: working together on certain projects and tasks not only promotes student interest, but also creates a sense of “belonging to a group” and satisfies their need to communicate with each other, which has a positive effect on the desire to attend and actively participate in classes;

- online discussions: in order to take an active part in discussions, the topic of which is

announced in advance, students need to prepare for them, review the recommended material, which promotes search activity and as a result improves motivation;

- business games: participation in business games allows psychology students to better understand the peculiarities of the profession, to work out the peculiarities of the interaction “psychologist-client”, to deal with the main problems, etc., which contributes to the formation of motivation and a conscious approach to learning.

However, when using interactive tools in online learning it is necessary to communicate the task to students in advance (especially if it is a discussion or project) so that they have time to prepare, provide students with clear, specific instructions, be able to use appropriate technical tools, and organize students into groups.

After making the above changes to the online classes, we conducted another survey among students to find out how much the optimization of online learning had affected the problems stated by students in the previous survey. According to the results of the second survey, the majority of students noted improved communication between students and teachers, improved motivation, which also affected time management. The increase in independent work and problems with technology are still significant problems but they are highlighted by a smaller percentage of students.

Conclusions. The theoretical analysis and practical research conducted in this article have shown that the forced transition to online training of future psychologists was associated with a significant number of psychological problems, the occurrence of which depends on the technical aspects of the organization of the educational process, the level of its material support and the specific psychological conditions of its implementation. The approaches to solving these problems analyzed by the authors were largely the result of the high professionalism and psychological stability of the teaching staff of higher education institutions and the manifestation of their creative potential, readiness for change and improvement of their professional level, despite the most unfavorable conditions of the pandemic and wartime.

A promising area for our further research. The identified techniques and methods of overcoming the challenges of the transition to online training require further reflection, development and improvement, which will be the focus of our future work.

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