

Student Perceptions of Progress and Engagement in Language Learning: The Blended-Learning Model (the Case of Ukrainian)

Alla Nedashkivska
University of Alberta, Canada

ABSTRACT:

The study examines the perceptions of second-language (L2) learners in a blended-learning model, incorporated in a beginner's Ukrainian classroom at the post-secondary level. The analysis is based on student perceptions of their learning experiences using the model. Specifically, the analysis focuses on how students perceive their language learning experience in both face-to-face and online learning spaces, how they view the effectiveness of the blended-learning model in the development of various skills and language proficiency, and which elements and activities they consider to be successful and contributive to learning. The focus is on how students view their progress and engagement in the process of L2 learning. The study also considers how the blended-learning model relates to learning outcomes, that is an increase in, or lack of, language proficiency gains.

The results provide input into the implementation of blended-learning, and research associated with this new teaching and learning model in an L2 classroom.

Introduction

Methods of foreign language learning and instruction have continuously evolved over the decades with the goal of better enabling successful second-language (L2) learning. This evolution has focused on maximizing the learning space, time and experience of learners, and has paid particular attention to the use of evolving technologies. As Romeo et al. note, late 1950s “saw the introduction of the tape recorder into public schools using audiolingual approaches” (2017, p. 682), which then developed into an established method of combining instructor-fronted teaching with language laboratory activities. According to Romeo, “[w]hile the days of sound booths and reel-to-reel recorders have been over for decades, the questions surrounding the efficacy of technology both in and outside the classroom, especially about what is in the 21st century called blended learning, remain” (2017, p. 682).

At its core, blended-learning is “the continued use of face-to-face (F2F) teaching as a basic learning block of the learning experience, enriched and enhanced by the integration of the Internet and other teaching and learning technologies into studies undertaken both in and out of the classroom” (Marsh, 2012, p. 3). The F2F component includes social interaction, in which the instructor and other students are present, with the online component constituting a computer-assisted language-learning mode, in which students self-engage in the learning process in virtual space, individually and with other students (Nedashkivska, 2015, p. 2). In educational settings, the implementation of this combination of online teaching and learning tools, and F2F learning and instruction continues to grow.

In the case studied here, the introduction of the blended-learning model into Ukrainian language instruction and learning was initially viewed as a tactic to address challenges faced with enrollments and tightening budgets in post-secondary education. The shift to fewer in-class hours, for instance, was seen as a tool by which to increase scheduling flexibility, thereby positively impacting enrollment. In addition, this new learning format constituted a way of taking advantage of new instructional technologies available for L2

learning, which has generally been shown to have positive impacts on student experiences. By way of introducing innovative technologies, the goals were also to improve student mastery of the language and to present students with more resources for autonomous and self-paced learning.

By studying the application of this model, student perceptions of this new learning environment, and, to a certain extent, the effects of this model, allows one to look beyond the mere tactics noted above. And by focusing on student perceptions of their progress and engagement in learning within blended-learning, we gain a better understanding of the students' roles in and beliefs about the learning process, leading potentially to greater student satisfaction and success in L2 learning in today's highly mediated and digital world.

Literature

The incorporation of blended-learning models in higher education, and in L2 in particular, has been well investigated. Several studies empirically address the instruction and acquisition of language competence in an L2 classroom with an added computer-assisted language-learning component. With respect to the blended-learning model, many of the studies indicate that when the model is properly designed and applied, it has the potential to significantly improve student learning experiences (Marsch, 2012; Pena-Sanchez and Hicks, 2006; Stracke, 2005; Stracke, 2007). A number of studies also address the advantages and disadvantages of blended-learning courses. Among the advantages are: twenty-four-hour access to learning resources, flexibility in using the resources, reinforcement of student autonomy, increased control over learning, and opportunities for collaboration with instructors and peers. The disadvantages that have been identified are: a lack of connection between the two learning spaces, *decreased* control over learning, less guidance and monitoring, technological distractions, heavier workload for students, and students' inadequate computer skills (for a detailed discussion see Nedashkivska, 2015, pp. 2-3). At the same time, some scholars show that a blended-learning model "offers to learners affective and

linguistic advantages over both e-learning and FTF modes” (Bueno-Alastuey and López Pérez, 2013, p. 2).

With respect to student perceptions of this model, Bueno-Alastuey and López Pérez demonstrate that increased inclusion of technology leads to perceptions of its usefulness for productive skills, specifically the development of speaking in blended learning models. They also show that students demonstrate their appreciation for technology, which contributes to increases in motivation towards language learning (2013, p. 15). The present study offers similar results, as discussed below.

There are also studies that show either mixed or negative student perceptions of their experiences in the blended-learning formats (Bothwell, 2016; Russell and Curtis, 2013; Stevenson and Liu, 2010). Overall, many results continue to be ambiguous, and can vary due to innumerable factors influencing each particular classroom experience.¹ The present study contributes to these explorations in the field of blended-learning and student perceptions of this relatively new pedagogical method.

The blended-learning model: a beginner’s Ukrainian classroom

The pedagogical practices incorporated into the model (Nedashkivska, 2015) emphasize the development of learners’ communicative competence, which is the primary objective of the Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach (Canale and Swain, 1980; Littlewood, 1981; Bachman, 1990) that has dominated language classroom practices since the 1980s. Although within this approach the traditional language classroom has seen a move towards more learner-centered practices, many instructors still play the role of

¹ Please note that the incorporation and use of a blended-learning model differs from class to class and depends on the instructor, resources, and approaches. Therefore, when interpreting results from other studies, some caution should be exercised. In the studied case, learning and instruction take place both in F2F and online.

the “deliverer” of information. With the blended model the aim is for traditional instructional tasks, such as presentation of new vocabulary and grammar material, to be moved mostly online, thus freeing class time for learner-centered activities that focus on the speaking and interactional skills of learners in a collaborative environment. This shift promotes learner-centered activities, enabling the true implementation of CLT into language learning and teaching.

As outlined above, the blended-learning model is a combination of F2F and online instruction and learning. The organizational structure of this model is presented in Figure 1:

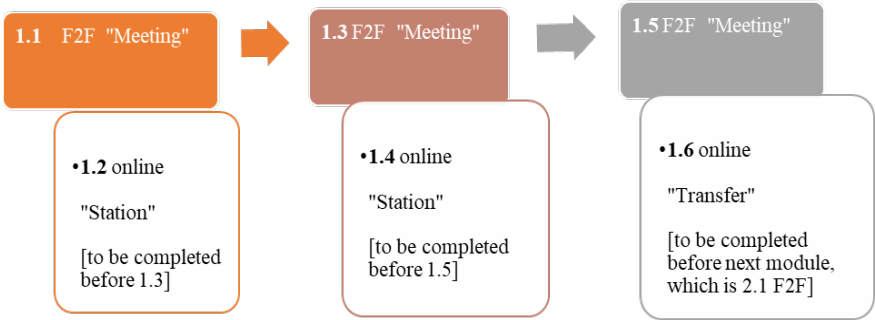


Figure 1. One-week course organization: general structure (an example for Module 1)

Figure 1 illustrates a prototypical one-week long course module, which is a continuum of F2F and online components. In this one-week module, students have three in-class or F2F contact hours. In addition, students complete three independent online study sessions and online home assignments. Importantly, these online stations play multiple roles, being concurrently the venue for instruction, independent learning of new material, as well as homework and practice of what was introduced during F2F class time. As reported by students in the questionnaire, on average they spend between 1.5 and 2.5 hours per week on completing the online activities, a period that varies from student to student. Before introducing this model, a beginner’s Ukrainian was taught over five physical contact hours per week, with students also completing

regularly assigned homework.² On the surface it may seem that the blended-learning model shortens the number of hours students dedicate to independent study and homework. I would, however, like to posit that adapting the materials in the blended-learning model to devices and gadgets accessible for student use, actually makes the students perceive the learning process as less onerous and time consuming than were past models. It also underlines the effectiveness of the model, delivering results in a more effective and efficient manner. More on this below.

The Study

The resources on which this study is based were first “field tested” in 2015-2016 in a beginner’s Ukrainian classroom at the post-secondary level. Following this first adaptation and use for an additional year (2016-2017), a survey was conducted, the results of which are analyzed below.³ The present and primary focus is on student perceptions about their learning experiences in this new L2 learning environment.

In the study, two major questions emerge about the blended-learning model in an L2 learning environment: (i) whether the blended-learning model leads to active and engaged learning with satisfactory or enhanced student learning experiences; and (ii) how does the blended-learning model relate to learning outcomes, that is increased, or lack of, gains in proficiency using the model as compared to traditional F2F instruction. In the analysis, I begin by focusing on how students perceive their language learning experience, what is important for them in the process, what they view as contributing to their gaining of language proficiency; in short, how

² For a detailed description of this specific model, its pedagogical design and technological details, see Sivachenko and Nedashkivska (2017). Readers may also want to peruse through the resource at: <https://www.podorozhiua.com/>

³ Please note that survey was conducted in collaboration with Olena Sivachenko, as a part of a larger collaborative research project, in which the study is approached both quantitatively and qualitatively, with each researcher studying data from distinct perspectives.

they view their progress and engagement in the process of language learning. The analysis proceeds with the results that relate to learning outcomes.

Methods

In order to collect the data, Olena Sivachenko and I developed a questionnaire consisting of 44 open- and closed-ended questions. The questions were designed to elicit information regarding participants' demographics, their knowledge and prior experience with computer and Internet technologies, and reasons for taking the course. Importantly, the questions also asked about the participants' perceptions of their learning experience, specifically their perceptions of the on-line and in-class components (see Appendix I). In designing the questionnaire and responding to specific research questions that focus on students' perceptions of their learning experience, the unipolar rating scale was adopted to measure the level of importance a participant attaches to a particular perception they hold. In the present method, the scale ranges from zero 'not at all true' to four 'very true' (also 'poor' to 'excellent'; 'much lighter' to 'much heavier'; and 'not at all knowledgeable' to 'very knowledgeable'), with no precise midpoint, allowing for fluidity in responses. As Krosnick and Fabrigar note, along a unipolar continuum scale, respondents "readily conceive of zero, a slight amount, a moderate amount, and a great deal", justifying four rating points as the safe number of ratings (1997, p. 145). At the time of this writing, responses from 41 participants are classified and presented in the analysis.

The administration of the survey took place at the end of each semester from fall 2015 until spring 2017.⁴ The participants are learners of Ukrainian, all enrolled in a beginner's Ukrainian language

⁴ Please note that because the surveys were conducted at the end of each semester over the specified data collection period, a preliminary analysis comparing students' responses from each semester was conducted. The results did not indicate any significant differences between the data collected from separate semesters. Therefore, the responses are analyzed as one cumulative data set.

course in university. Most of the participants are undergraduate students from various programs in humanities and sciences. To address the question about student proficiency levels achieved, that is, the learning outcomes, I supplement the analysis with the results of 27 final exams that students completed after 26 weeks of language instruction. Tests by students that enrolled in the second semester only, that is, those who were not exposed to the blended-learning format from the first semester, were not considered; see below for further details.

Analysis

The analysis begins by studying how students perceive their progress and engagement in the learning environment that the blended learning model presents. Specifically, I analyze how students perceive their language learning experience in class and online, what is of importance to them in the process, what is viewed as successful, and what they view as contributing to their gaining language proficiency.

Progress in language learning

First, I demonstrate how students perceive their learning experiences in both in-class and online spaces. The overall results for the in-class materials and activities are summarized in Table 1:

<i>Rating</i>	Fun	Motivating	Interesting	Easy	Effective₅	Other (specify)
4	29⁶	26	32	9	33	
3	9	13	7	18	4	
2	3	2	2	11	3	
1				3		
0					1	
Total	41	41	41	41	41	0

Table 1: Overall, working with IN-CLASS materials was (A19⁷) (4 [very true]0 [not at all true])

As Table 1 illustrates, thirty-three students assign the highest rating of four to effectiveness of the in-class materials, thirty-two respondents assign the highest ranking to these materials as being interesting, twenty-nine give the rating of four to the category of fun, and twenty-six rank them as highly motivating. Only nine students consider it ‘very true’ when gauging these materials as easy.

⁵ As one of the reviewers noted, choices to describe student experiences in questions 19 and 26 are all positive. Although in other questions students were asked about which activities they enjoyed least (24 and 31), which activities they see as least contributing to learning (21 and 28), and were asked to rate the model on the scale of ‘poor’ to ‘excellent’ (36), the positive labels in questions 19 and 26 may have created a bias towards positive responses and may have influenced the responses collected. Please note that in (19) and (26), students had a chance to answer ‘other’, and none chose such answers. The author acknowledges this possible limitation of the instrument design.

⁶ In the tables, numbers refer to the number of students that chose a particular rating; between four and zero.

⁷ Here and henceforth, references are made to Appendix I and the respective questions analyzed.

3	In-class	9	13	7	18	4	
	Online	13	9	13	18	7	
2	In-class	3	2	2	11	3	
	Online	6	8	7	7	6	
1	In-class				3		
	Online		1	1		1	
0	In-class					1	
	Online	1	1		1	1	

Table 2: Overall, working with ONLINE materials was (A26)
(4 [very true]0 [not at all true])

As shown in Table 2, twenty-one students rate the online materials as fun, for twenty-two students these are motivating, and interesting for twenty students. Fifteen students mark the online activities as easy, and for twenty-six students these are ranked as effective. These numbers indicate an overall positive perception among students of the online activities, but slightly less positive when compared to the in-class materials (Table 2).⁸ These results may relate to the fact that in language learning, the human factor is perceived as

⁸ It would be interesting to compare this online approach with past student perceptions of the effectiveness of homework and the more traditional language labs, particularly as labs are now being largely phased out by universities. This will need to be reserved for a future study.

crucial and necessary. Interestingly, the online materials are perceived as easier than the in-class materials. This may be viewed as a positive signal, meaning that the students perceive the online activities as doable and not intimidating.

In responding to the question, “Which online materials contribute most to language learning (A27),” four students note, “all.” For twenty-two students, the flashcards contribute most to learning. Eighteen respondents state that viewing and listening contribute most to learning. For eight students, these are writing and spelling activities. And both the matching exercises and the online quizzes are each mentioned by four students. Regarding activities that contribute least to language learning (A28), ten students respond, “none,” and four students point to spelling and typing activities. Under the most challenging activities (A29), sixteen students list spelling and typing. Regarding the question about which activities students enjoy most (A30), six student note “all of them,” eighteen respondents enjoy matching most of all, both flashcards and online quizzes are noted by six students each. Among the least enjoyed online activities (A31), eight students note “none” and twenty-four list spelling race and typing activities. As noted above, these are also viewed by students as the most challenging. Overall with respect to the online materials (as Table 2 illustrates), it is evident that students perceive them as effective, fun, and interesting, but also challenging, especially the spelling activities. The online activities are also perceived as easier than those during F2F learning. In the online space, students enjoy flashcards most of all for vocabulary learning and practice, followed by listening and comprehension, writing, and assessment activities.

The analysis proceeds with the results about how students perceive their progress in language learning through their development of specific language skills in both in-class and online settings. These results are summarized in Table 3:

Rating	Developing skills & learning	Communication	Speaking	Listening	Writing	Reading	Pronunciation	Grammar	Vocabulary
4	In-class	29	31	24	16	23	26	25	28
	Online	11	10	25	22	26	15	21	30
3	In-class	10	8	12	14	16	11	13	13
	Online	21	17	13	13	11	15	13	8
2	In-class	1	1	3	8	2	1	3	
	Online	6	8	1	3	3	7	5	2
1	In-class	1	1	1	3		3		
	Online	2	5		1		3	1	
0	In-class								
	Online			1					

Table 3: Perceptions of language skills development (A18 and A25)
(4 [very true]0 [not at all true])

Table 3 shows how the two learning spaces, from the students' point of view, contribute to the development of all language skills noted here. If we consider responses under the rating of 4, 'very

true', students see the in-class learning space contributing most to the development of their speaking (31) and communication (29) skills. In addition, the in-class learning is also perceived as contributing notably to vocabulary (28) and grammar (25) learning, development of pronunciation (26) and listening (24), as well as reading (23) and, to a lesser extent, writing skills (16). The online space is seen as contributing most to student vocabulary learning (30). Students also perceive that with the online activities, they develop reading (26), listening (25), and writing (22) skills, as well as learning grammar (21). The respondents see that the online space contributes less to the development of pronunciation (15), communication (11) and speaking (10). As these results suggest, communication stands as prominent in the in-class learning space. Vocabulary learning, along with the development of listening and reading skills, are notable in the online space. However, when considering these comparisons in greater detail, the overall numbers are not that divergent between the two learning spaces. In both, for instance, students see their vocabulary (28 vs 30) and grammar (25 vs 21) learning, and the development of reading (23 vs 26) and listening (24 vs 25) skills very similarly. Moreover, if combined, the ratings of 4 'very true' and 3 'true', demonstrate that thirty-three students (eleven [4] and twenty-one [3]) view the online space as contributing to their communications skills.

When initially designing the resources, we saw them as flipping the learning experience in such a way that the in-class time is freed for more communicative activities, thus contributing primarily to the development of speaking and communication skills. And, the present results confirm such considerations. It was also hypothesized that the online space is to contribute significantly to learning grammar, with listening and reading activities as a part of this individualized learning. The present results of students' perception show a more harmonized picture than was originally imagined. And although some slight differences exist on how students see the two learning spaces as contributing to their development of various language skills, overall both spaces are seen as effective for all the skills noted above. That is, what is seen is not the juxtaposition of the

two learning spaces, but rather the interconnectedness between the two, which students see and appreciate.

Student engagement

Student engagement traditionally is associated with processes and activities that contribute to student learning and achievements. From a constructivist point of view, engagement relates to learning as “influenced by how an individual participates in educationally purposeful activities.” (Coates, 2006, p. 26) According to Coates:

“individual learners are ultimately the agents in discussions of engagement, and primary focus is placed upon understanding their activities and situations. Thus, while the idea of student engagement draws together considerations about student learning, institutional environments, learning resources and teachers, it maintains a focus on students and on their involvement with university study. In essence, therefore, student engagement is concerned with the extent to which students are engaging in a range of educational activities that research has shown as likely to lead to high quality learning. Such activities might include active learning, involvement in enriching educational experiences, seeking guidance from staff or working collaboratively with other students.” (p. 26)

Therefore, student engagement is understood as direct and active student involvement in the learning process.

In the present data set, when participants discuss how they perceive their learning experience, their involvement in the learning process that contributes to their success, and specifically, how they view their engagement, there emerge four major themes delineating learning. These are: Active (collaborative and individualized), Exposure-driven, Curiosity-driven, and Self-efficacy-driven learning. I propose to view these characteristics of learning as directly contributing to engaged learning.

Active learning: collaborative and individualized

With respect to in-class activities, the results show that students stress their engagement with peers, their pair and group work, as well as speaking and conversational activities - as contributing most to their language learning progress. The majority of the students (thirty out of forty-one) mention group and pair work overtly, as illustrated in responses 1 and 2:

1. The ability to constantly interact with people in small classes and respond to the teacher [is the most positive thing in my learning experience].
2. Communicating with other classmates and playing games [contributed most to my language learning].

In examples 1 and 2, which are representative of several answers in the data set, students stress the in-class collaborative learning.

With respect to the online activities, students stress the effectiveness of and their appreciation for individualized learning, as in the following:

3. Getting a chance to work through things on your own [is an advantage of blended learning].
4. I like that I can repeat exercises until I understand the material.
5. The model allows students a nice self-guided aspect.

In examples 3-5, students acknowledge the self-regulated learning, the ability to practice as many times as one wants or needs, and the self-guided aspect of the learning resources.

In addition, both learning spaces are viewed by students as 'active' learning and student- community oriented, which is engaging. Consider responses 6-10:

6. ... there is a lot of active learning between me and students.
7. The model is more interactive and it is easier to practice the language [in comparison to traditional language learning].
8. ...lots of learning on the go.

9. The course components worked well with each other, and it was very fun and engaging altogether.
10. Connecting with and being a part of the community of Ukrainian learners [is the most positive thing in my learning experience].

As examples 6-10 show, active and interactive learning is foregrounded in reference to both in-class and online. This is in contrast to a traditional language learning scenario, without the blended-learning component, that does not necessarily have an interactive 'home' component.

Exposure-driven learning

Exposure-driven learning figures as a prominent theme of what students view as an effective and engaged learning process. This category is comprised of exposure and contact with the language, accessibility of resources, self-paced, autonomous, focused and 'on track' learning. The Exposure-driven learning is illustrated by responses 11-19:

11. Exposed to it more (every day) is a good thing to keep it in your mind [regarding the combination of in-class and online materials].
12. [The model] allows for the continuous exposure to the language every day.
13. [The model] provides constant contact and interaction with the language, which is necessary to learning.
14. [In the model one] can learn on your own time.
15. If I have challenges, it becomes easy for me to review and study alone without stalling the class.
16. We were forced to complete online homework, which made me constantly on track, and the fact that what we learned online had to be used for the next class.
17. I can spend as much time as I want on the online module and become prepared for class. Because of the online modules, I was rarely lost in class.
18. Being able to sit on my own and think things through with the online component as an aid made learning the language

extremely easy and gave me a chance before class to prepare questions to ask. It was really nice to be prepared with the material already looked at.

19. Forced studying at home, more connections for the brain to make on a daily basis.

In all of these examples 11-19, students stress their appreciation for the exposure they had to the language. Importantly, students highlight the individualized self-paced learning for which the online components allow. Students also value their ability to be prepared for class, allowing them to be more active and engaged in class in a collaborative learning environment.

Curiosity-driven learning

In many responses, students acknowledge the benefits of constant contact with the language and culture. Respondents also mention that this exposure contributes positively to their increased curiosity and involvement in learning. Consider the following responses 20-23:

20. [The model raised my curiosity] mostly about culture, because I was able to see photos and a lot of them were from Ukraine.
21. [The model raised my curiosity because] I was exposed to a lot of Ukrainian words and some of its culture.
22. ...pictures of Ukraine ... made me want learn Ukrainian and travel there.
23. [the course] raised curiosity because we had a chance to hear/see videos music etc. from Ukraine and learn how to speak it better.

In examples 20-23, students exhibit their appreciation for authentic materials and relate their constant exposure to the language and culture to their Curiosity-driven learning experience. This Curiosity-driven experience most likely contributes to increased student engagement in learning by any language learning model, not only the blended one.

Self-efficacy-driven learning

The concept of self-efficacy, according to Bandura, constitutes “...people’s judgements of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances.” (1986, p. 391) Self-efficacy relates not to the skills people have, but with the judgements of what they can do with these skills. Therefore, factors that relate to self-efficacy concern the participants’ confidence in their ability to learn a language and their judgements of what they can do with the skills learned, as well as their perception of reaching the expected goals. In the present study, responses to the statement “At the end of the course you feel” really point to the robust sense of student self-efficacy. Examples 24-32 illustrate this sense of self-efficacy voiced by the participants:

24. Confident in Ukrainian. I have improved my conversation skills as well as grammar.
25. I’ve learned many new things coming to this class and feel more confident in my ability.
26. Happy. It was a fun course and my abilities in Ukrainian are growing.
27. I feel like my expectations were exceeded. In a short time period, I feel like I’ve got a good foundation for the Ukrainian language.
28. Prepared to keep moving forward. I now have a strong enough Ukrainian base to work off in my progress.
29. Glad that I took it. It was a really fun course, one that really enjoyed going to – it was easy to keep motivated in the learning environment.
30. I feel a bit more Ukrainian. I can communicate sparingly.
31. ...I was really happy that I could learn a lot. I thought I’d learn “hello” and “goodbye”, but I can express thoughts, too.
32. Rewarded. Because it was very challenging, and I had to find new ways to study and practice, but I learned a lot.

As examples 24-32 demonstrate, students express their self-efficacy through the various points. A sense of confidence and progress in language proficiency is voiced in responses 24, 25, and 26. Example 27 displays a sense of exceeded expectations; and a solid

base and motivation for continuing with studying the language is the theme in (27), (28), and (29). In both (30) and (31), the feeling of being more Ukrainian that contributes to communicative abilities is overt. And, importantly, in (32) one student reports learning not only language skills, but also acquiring new learning strategies in general.

In summary, the analysis of student perceptions shows that students view engaged learning as active, combining collaborative and individualized learning, exposure-driven, curiosity-driven, and self-efficacy-driven learning. This characterization goes beyond some models of engagement, which distinguish three elements that make up engagement: behavioral, i.e. actions students undertake; emotional, i.e. student enjoyment or lack of, and feelings towards their work; and cognitive, i.e. student efforts towards learning (Fredericks, Blumenfeld, and Paris, 2004). In the classification offered in the present study, active (collaborative and individualized) learning could be considered as being both behavioral and emotional; exposure-driven learning as behavioral and cognitive; curiosity-driven as emotional engagement; and self-efficacy-driven as emotional and cognitive engagement. Importantly, however, the present analysis of student perceptions of their progress and engagement in the blended-learning model supports some earlier studies that stress the centrality of the learner and learner engagement in the learning process. Specifically, in connection to the blended-learning format, previous studies have shown that in a language classroom - courses that incorporate computer-assisted language learning components promote student engagement in “the construction and use of their knowledge, rather than acting as passive absorbers and duplicators of information.” (Sagarra and Zapata, 2008, p. 210)

In answering the first research question about student perceptions of their learning, the results demonstrate that students view their learning as active. In the learning process, the respondents place themselves as actors, and not patients or receivers of information. Therefore, the results validate that students see the blended-learning model as contributing to an engaged learning with satisfying and enhanced student learning experiences.

Language proficiency achieved

The final analysis considers student performance after completing two semesters, or twenty-six weeks of instruction. The present study was carried out in an institution, in which only one section of Ukrainian for each level is taught regularly. Therefore, no comparative perspective was possible. In an ideal scenario, one would compare the exit results from two sections: one that was exposed to the blended-learning format; and the other, the control group with the ‘traditional’ instructional format, considering comparable variables such as teaching methods, textbooks, and the like. Therefore, the present study is limited to one group of students per year. Because of this procedural limitation, the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL) proficiency scale⁹ was used as an assessment guideline to analyze the results.¹⁰ Both written and oral final exams that students took at the end of the 2016 and 2017 academic years are studied.

The written tests included three components: writing, listening, and reading. The writing component consisted of the production of lists, choosing and producing simple verbal forms, producing simple case forms of nouns, pronouns and adjectives, matching questions and answers, and writing formulaic information, simple phrases, messages and personal letters. The listening component involved responding to simple audio-recordings by choosing words and phrases to answer simple questions. The reading component included reading and scanning through highly predictable texts with familiar contexts and answering simple questions. A sample test following this model can be seen in Appendix II.

⁹ ACTFL Proficiency scale: <https://www.languagetesting.com/actfl-proficiency-scale> Accessed November 4, 2018.

¹⁰ Note that the author has undergone training in the ACTFL assessment procedures and was a certified OPI tester of Russian in the past. Additionally, the most current ACTFL proficiency guidelines were followed and samples of a Slavic language were studied for validation of ratings (Russian in this case, samples of which are presented on the Council’s site): <https://www.actfl.org/publications/guidelines-and-manuals/actfl-proficiency-guidelines-2012/russian> Accessed January 22, 2019.

The oral exams assessed student speaking and listening performance. During the oral exam, students were asked first to present on one of the three topics they prepared, and engage in one of the two situational conversations they also prepared ahead of time (these are all everyday topics in predictable situations; a sample of guidelines is shown in Appendix III). Twenty-seven participants and their performance on the final test are studied.¹¹ In Table 4, in addition to the ACTFL, the corresponding ratings of the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR¹²), the scale commonly used in language learning and assessment, are also provided for comparison.¹³

ACTFL	CEFR	Receptive skills			CEFR	Productive skills	
		Listening	Reading			Writing	Speaking
Intermediate Low	A 1.2		1		A 2	4	4
Novice High [N-H]	A 1.1	25	20		A 1	12	14
Novice Mid	(A) 0	2	6		(A) 0	11	9

Table 4: Proficiency achieved (2015-2016, 2016-2017: 27 students in total)

¹¹ The instructor, and the author of this article, conducted the assessments because, as common for the less commonly taught language programs at the time of the experiment, no other qualified assessor was available. This is an acknowledged limitation of this study.

¹² CEFR scale: <https://www.language-testing.com/cefr-scale> Accessed November 4, 2018.

¹³ The official correspondence between ACTFL and CEFR ratings and ACTFL assessments can be accessed at: https://www.actfl.org/sites/default/files/reports/Assigning_CEFR_Ratings_To_ACTFL_Assessments.pdf Accessed January 22, 2019.

As summarized in Table 4, with respect to receptive skills - in listening, a considerable majority or twenty-five students, rank at the Novice High level according to the ACTFL scale. In reading, the majority of students (20) also reach the Novice High level. In the productive skills, that is in writing, twelve students are at the Novice High level, four students are at the Intermediate Low, and eleven students score at the Novice Mid level. In speaking, fourteen are at the Novice High level, four students are at the Intermediate Low and nine are at the Novice Mid level. Based on these results, an average student's level, according to the ACTFL ranking, relates to the Novice High level. According to the CEFR assessment guidelines, this level corresponds to the A.1.1 level (receptive skills) or to the A 1 (productive skills). According to Benjamin Rifkin, for languages in Group 3 (the category into which Ukrainian is grouped), students typically average a Novice High level of proficiency after one hundred and fifty hours of instruction (2003, p. 583). In the present study, students reached the level of proficiency that is typically well within expectations after an average two semesters of a Slavic L2 study.

In the present case, in a traditional non-blended setting there would have been one hundred and thirty instructional contact hours. In the studied blended-learning format, the model is a combination of seventy-eight F2F hours and between thirty-nine and sixty-five instructional and learning hours online.¹⁴ As the results demonstrate, in the blended-learning setting students meet the expected level of progress in the course. The results also suggest that there are no significant gains, nor are there any significant loses, in using the blended-learning model in an L2 learning environment.¹⁵ That being said, the data is insufficient to provide clear insight into any

¹⁴ As noted above, students indicate they spend on average between 1.5 and 2.5 hours per week on completing the online activities (26 weeks of instruction in total). However, the amount of time learners spend online varies.

¹⁵ This is not to say that returning to the language laboratories used in decades past would not have a negative effect. Student perception is naturally tied in with expectations related to technological advances.

correlations between the use of the blended-learning model and levels of language proficiency.

Nevertheless, the results echo previous studies that focus on comparisons of the online instruction with F2F instruction, specifically that there are no significant differences between the two. According to Chenoweth et al. (2006, p. 123), “the students in hybrid online courses made similar progress to the students in the equivalent offline courses” (p. 132, see also Echavez-Solano, 2003). There are also studies that show slightly more positive results from implementing the hybrid models into language learning, as noted for Spanish by Scida and Saury (2006). In their study, Scida and Saury demonstrate that the factors of flexibility and independence to complete work at the students’ own pace, as well as immediate feedback on student’s work, contribute to the improvement of students’ academic skills and their better preparation for class work, thus leading to an improved in-class performance (p. 526). Because of these differing findings regarding student proficiency levels in hybrid or blended-learning models, more testing is clearly needed, with the results to be studied further and in greater detail than presently reported. At this point in the analysis, the results suggest that perhaps not the blended-learning model is to be deliberated, but rather the students’ language learning experience and how today’s students perceive their learning in a particular context or in a particular model.

Discussion and conclusions

Two main research questions guided the present study. The primary research question sought to provide some insights into whether the blended-learning model leads to active and engaged learning with satisfactory or enhanced student learning experiences. The second question considered how the blended-learning model relates to learning outcomes, or whether or not the model contributes to increased language proficiency gains.

Student perceptions of their language learning experience, the focus of the primary research question, were studied and related to the engaged learning model. Overall, the results showed that students see the blended-learning model as contributing to engaged learning

with satisfying and enhanced student learning experiences. With respect to learning outcomes, that is, the second research question, the study suggests that after completing two semesters of language learning via the blended-learning format, learners reach the expected levels of language proficiency. The study also advanced the idea that not so much the blended-learning model is to be investigated, but importantly, experiences of the learners in an L2 classroom. Student perceptions of their learning progress and engagement in the learning process, in class and online, are telling of students' potential successes in a language classroom, and not limited to the Ukrainian language classroom.

The present study agrees with Romeo et al. (2017, p. 690), who note that “technology itself, and attitudes towards it, are two variables among many. Technology has always and will continue to come in many forms, but it is no panacea...Technology is a tool that needs to be acknowledged within an array of variables examined through research, not as a variable in and of itself”. In fact, they note that their results show that technology does make instruction more meaningful and engaging (p. 691). However, according to them, “[t]rying to link technology-based classroom methods to student gains may ... be an unproductive line of research” (p. 690). They conclude that “[l]anguage learning is ... multivariate, and all research should approach instruction with that point of view” (p. 690).

In the studied blended-learning model of a less commonly taught language, in which technology plays an important role, students viewed their learning as active, collaborative and also individualized. This combination offers students an added effectiveness of their learning experience. Students also emphasized the exposure-driven learning that blended-learning enables. In addition, students stressed the importance of constant exposure to language and accessibility of resources for self-paced and self-regulated learning. These factors assist students in being prepared for class, not feeling lost in class, and not slowing down other learners. All of these factors make learning accessible and secure, thus engaging and productive. In addition, students mentioned that they are involved and engaged in the learning process if their curiosity is high. Under this rubric, they noted that it is the constant contact with

the language and culture which promotes their engagement with authenticity, thus leading to student willingness to continue with learning. Student engagement was also shown to be directly related to student self-efficacy. Students' feeling of progress, their sense of gaining expected or exceeding levels of proficiency, and their confidence in language abilities, all were shown to contribute to engaged learning. And in today's highly technological and digital world, being constantly engaged and on task means being effective and successful.

References

- Bachman, L. F. (1990). *Fundamental considerations in language testing*. Oxford University Press.
- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs, NJ.
- Bothwell, E. (2016, November 10). US blended learning students “least engaged with teaching.” *Times Higher Education News*.
- Bueno-Alastuey, M. C., & López Pérez, M. V. (2013). Evaluation of a blended learning language course: students’ perceptions of appropriateness for the development of skills and language areas. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, doi: 10.1080/09588221.2013.770037.
- Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1, 1-47.
- Chenoweth, A. N, Ushida, E., & Murday K. (2006). Student learning in hybrid French and Spanish courses: An overview of language online. *CALICO Journal*, 24(1), 115-145.
- Coates, H. (2005). The value of student engagement for higher education quality assurance. *Quality in Higher Education*, 11(1), 25-36.
- Echavez-Solano, N. (2003). A comparison of student outcomes and attitudes in technology-enhanced vs. traditional second semester Spanish language courses (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Minnesota.
- Fredricks, J. A., Blumenfeld, P. C., & Paris, A. H. (2004). School engagement: Potential of the concept, state of the evidence. *Review of Educational Research* 74(1), 59-109.

- Krosnik, J. A., & Fabrigar, L. R. (1997). Designing rating scales for effective measurement in surveys. In L. Lyberg, P. Biemer, M. Collins, E. de Leeuw, C. Dippo, N. Schwarz, & D. Trewin (Eds.) *Survey Measurement and Process Quality* (pp. 141-164). New York: John Wiley.
- Littlewood, W. (1981). *Communicative language teaching*. Cambridge University Press.
- Marsh, D. (2012). *Blended learning: Creating learning opportunities for language learners*. Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, Sao Paulo, Delhi, Mexico City: Cambridge University Press.
- Nedashkivska, A. (2015). Developing a blended-learning model in an L2 classroom. *Journal of Foreign Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* 1(3), IBU Publications: International Burch University, Sarajevo, ISSN 2303-5528, 22mspp.
- Pena-Sanchez, R., & Hicks, R. C. (2006). Faculty perceptions of communications channels: A survey. *International Journal of Innovation and Learning*, 3(1), 45–62.
- Rifkin, B. (2003). Oral proficiency learning outcomes and curricular design. *Foreign Language Annals*, 36(4), 582-588.
- Romeo, K., Bernhardt, E. B., Miano, A., & Leffell, C. M. (2017). Exploring blended learning in a postsecondary Spanish language program: observations, perceptions, and proficiency ratings. *Foreign Language Annals*, 50(4), 681-696.
- Russell, V., & Curtis, W. (2013). Comparing a large- and small-scale online language course: An examination of teacher and learner perceptions. *Internet and Higher Education*, 16, 1–13.
- Sagarra, N., & Zapata, G. C. (2008). Blending classroom instruction with online homework: A study of student perceptions of computer-assisted L2 learning. *ReCALL*, 20(2), 208 – 224.

- Scida, E. E., & Saury, R. E. (2006). Hybrid courses and their impact on student and classroom performance: A case study at the university of Virginia. *CALICO Journal*, 23(3), 517-531.
- Sivachenko, O., & Nedashkivska, A. (2017). Technologically enhanced language learning and instruction: Подорожі.UA: Beginner's Ukrainian." *Less Commonly Taught Slavic Languages: The Learner, the Instructor and the Learning Experience in the Second Language Classroom (The North American Context)*. Special Issues of *East/West: Journal of Ukrainian Studies*, 4(1), 119-127.
- Stevenson, M., & Liu, M. (2010). Learning a language with Web 2.0: Exploring the use of social networking features of foreign language learning websites. *CALICO Journal*, 27, 233–259.
- Stracke, E. (2005). Conflicting voices: Blended learning in a German university foreign language classroom. In M. Dúill, R. Zahn, and K. D. C. Höppner (Eds.) *Zusammenarbeiten: Eine Festschrift für Bernd Voss* (pp. 403–420). Bochum: AKS-Verlag.
- Stracke, E. (2007). A road to understanding: A qualitative study into why learners drop out of a blended language learning (BLL) environment. *ReCALL*, 19(1), 57–78.

Appendix I
STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

[*adjusted formatting*]

You are being asked to complete the following questionnaire. Feel free to use the back of the sheets to make additional comments.

1. ***Your gender is:*** ☐ female ☐ male ☐ other

2. ***Your age is*** _____

3. ***In what program are you enrolled?***

☐ Bachelor's ☐ Master's ☐ PhD ☐ Honor's

4. ***Please specify your***

major _____

minor _____

and/or certificate (if applicable) _____

5. ***How knowledgeable are you with computer/internet technologies?***

<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 0
(very knowledgeable)				(not at all knowledgeable)

6. ***Do you use computer/internet technologies?***

<input type="checkbox"/> every day	<input type="checkbox"/> every second day	<input type="checkbox"/> once/twice per week	<input type="checkbox"/> rarely	<input type="checkbox"/> never
---------------------------------------	--	---	---------------------------------	--------------------------------

7. Do you use computer/internet technologies for learning? If yes, how specifically?

8. Have you taken any other blended-learning courses? If yes, which one?

9. For your Ukrainian course, which device did you use to access and complete the online component?

10. Why did you decide to take UKR 111? (mark all that apply)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> to learn the language of your heritage | <input type="checkbox"/> to get good grades |
| <input type="checkbox"/> to better understand Ukrainian culture, history, literature, music, etc. | <input type="checkbox"/> to fulfill Language Other Than English Requirement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> to be part of the Ukrainian community in Canada or elsewhere | <input type="checkbox"/> to fulfill your degree requirement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> to be able communicate in Ukrainian | <input type="checkbox"/> for future career purposes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> for travel/living abroad | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> other (specify): _____ | |

11. What were your expectations/goals of the course?

12. Your expectations/goals of the course were met

- | | | | | |
|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 0 |
| (very true) | | | | (not at all true) |

13. At the end of the course you feel:

Why do you feel this way?

14. There was a connection between online materials with the materials you worked with in-class

☐ 4
(very true)

☐ 3

☐ 2

☐ 1

☐ 0
(not at all true)

15. How many times per week did you turn to your online materials (once, twice, three times or more, please specify)?

16. How many hours on average per week did you spend working with online materials?

17. How much time per week did you spend reviewing in-class materials outside the class?

18. Working with IN-CLASS materials helped you in

	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 (very true)	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 (not at all true)
• developing your communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• developing your speaking skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• developing your listening skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

• developing your writing skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• developing your reading skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• improving your pronunciation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• learning grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• learning vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• other (specify): _____					

19. Overall, working with IN-CLASS materials was

	4	3	2	1	0
	(very true)				(not at all true)
• fun	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• motivating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• interesting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• easy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• effective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
other (specify): _____					

20. Which IN-CLASS activities contributed MOST to your language learning?

21. Which IN-CLASS activities contributed LEAST to your language learning?

22. Which IN-CLASS activities were the most challenging?

23. Which IN-CLASS activities did you enjoy most?

24. Which IN-CLASS activities did you enjoy least?

Working with ONLINE materials helped you in

	<input type="checkbox"/> 4 (very true)	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 0 (not at all true)
• developing your communication skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• developing your speaking skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• developing your listening skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• developing your writing	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

skills					
• developing your reading skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• improving your pronunciation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• learning grammar	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• learning vocabulary	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• other (specify): <hr/>					

25. Overall, working with ONLINE materials was

	4 (very true)	3	2	1	0 (not at all true)
• fun	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• motivating	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• interesting	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• easy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
• effective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
other (specify): <hr/>					

43. Would you be willing to continue learning Ukrainian via non-blended model? Why? Or why not?

Add any other information regarding the course and/or your experiences of learning Ukrainian in this course.

THANK YOU! YOUR ANSWERS ARE VERY VALUABLE TO US!

Appendix II

SAMPLE TEST

[adjusted formatting]

Name: _____

Time: **2 hours**

Points: / 140

I. Listening

A) Listen to the dialogue and answer the following questions (5 points, 10 min).

1. Куди їде Марина?

а) До Києва.

б) До Львова.

в) До Одеси.

г) До Полтави.

2. На коли Марина купує квиток?

а) На дванадцять квітня.

б) На одинадцять квітня.

в) На тринадцять січня.

г) На чотирнадцять березня.

3. Який квиток купила Марина: люкс, купе чи плацкарт?

а) Люкс.

б) Купе.

в) Плацкарт.

4. Яке прізвище Марини?

а) Боровик.

б) Виговська.

в) Григоренко.

г) Мельничук.

5. Скільки коштує її квиток?

а) Сто тридцять вісім гривень.

б) Сто двадцять п'ять гривень.

в) Сто двадцять гривень.

г) Сто тридцять гривень.

II. Language in Focus

A) Fill in missing information in the following sentences using the words from the box (7 points, 6 min).

займається
займаємося

граю
займаються

грають
грає

граєш

1. Я часто _____ в баскетбол.
2. Ви _____ йогою?
3. Оксана часто _____ в шахи.
4. А ти _____ в теніс?
5. Ми іноді _____ веслуванням.
6. Вони рідко _____ спортом.

7. Марина та Іван завжди _____ в шахи

Б) Circle the correct form (6 points, 4 min).

1. Марина **іде/їде** трамваєм на базар.
2. Ви **йдете/їдете** на концерт пішки?
3. Я зараз **їду/їду** автобусом в університет.
4. Ми з мамою **їдемо/їдемо** пішки в парк.
5. Тарас та Ольга зараз **їдуть/їдуть** на таксі в аеропорт.
6. Ви **йдете/їдете** поїздом до Львова?

В) Put the words in brackets in the correct form (9 points, 6 min).

1. Тарас хоче стати _____ (офіціант).
2. Аліна хоче стати _____ (продавець).
3. Богдан і Славко хочуть стати _____ (фотографи).
4. Ти хочеш стати _____ (водій)?
5. Антон охоче стати _____ (музикант).
6. Марія хоче стати _____ (перукарка).

Г) Put the words in brackets in the correct form in the Past Tense (6 points, 5 min).

На вихідних мої батьки 1) _____ (поїхати) у Львів.
Спочатку вони 2) _____ (іти) у ресторан. Потім тато 3) _____ (поїхати) на екскурсію, а мама 4) _____ (іти) у театр. Вихідні були чудові!

Д) Put the words in brackets in the correct form (6 points, 5 min).

1. Куди поїхала Наталя? – Наталя поїхала на _____ (дача).
2. Де зараз Наталя? – Наталя зараз на _____ (дача).
3. Куди пішов Петро? – Петро пішов на _____ (море).
4. Де зараз Петро? – Петро зараз на _____ (море).

Е) Match questions with their corresponding answers (5 points, 5 min).

1. Скільки коштує квиток?	а) Один квиток, будь ласка
2. Що варто побачити?	б) Сто гривень.
3. А кредитки ви приймаєте?	в) У Львові.
4. Де знаходиться фестиваль?	г) Ні, тільки готівку.
5. Скільки квитків будете купувати?	д) Концерт Руслани.

Є) Finish the following sentences with four words (12 points, 5 min):

1. Мені подобається, коли в готелі є

_____ ,

_____ , _____

і _____ .

2. Я хвора. У мене _____ і

_____ . А ще у мене болить

_____ і _____ .

Ж) Write four mini-dialogues according to the suggested scenarios (24 points, 20 min).

1. You are staying at a hotel. You need something in your room. Call Customer Service and ask for it.

.....
[positive answer]

2. Invite your friend to the movies.

.....
[negative answer]

3. You are at the ticket office. You want to buy a ticket for the music festival.

.....
[positive answer]

.....
4. You are at the music festival. Ask people for advice where to go and what to see.

[asking for advice]

[giving advice]

[positive answer]

III. Reading

A) Read about Oksana's preparation for a festival and answer in full sentences (20 points, 20 min).

“Країна мрій” – один з найпопулярніших фестивалів в Україні. Я дуже багато чула про цей музичний фестиваль, але ніколи не була на ньому. На великій сцені виступають популярні гурти та співаки. На фестивалі також можна побачити та купити вироби народного мистецтва. “Країна мрій” – дуже цікавий та веселий фестиваль.

Цього року я поїду на фестиваль разом з друзями. Спочатку ми сплануємо поїзду. Фестиваль буде у Києві. З Луцька туди найкраще їхати поїздом. Ми купимо квитки на поїзд. Тоді ми замовимо готель, але ми ще не знаємо який. Потім я видрукую карту фестивалю, бо без

карти важко орієнтуватися. Це дуже великий фестиваль. Після того ми спакуємо свої валізи і, насамкінець, поїдемо на вокзал.

1. Як називається фестиваль?
2. Хто на ньому виступає?
3. Де буде фестиваль цього року?
4. З ким Оксана поїде на фестиваль?
5. Чим (*транспорт*) поїде Оксана на фестиваль?

IV. Writing

A) Write a letter to your friend giving some advice on healthy lifestyle. Include greeting and goodbye (4 points), and 5 full sentences (20 points, 12 min).

B) Imagine you are in a city of your dream. What do you think you would do there? Write 5 full sentences, using Subjunctive Mood (e.g., In [city] I would ...) (20 points, 12 min).

Bonus question! (3 points): provide 3 adjectives to describe music.

APPENDIX III

ORAL FINAL EXAM GUIDELINES

The 15-minute oral exam will consist of two parts: 1) a brief presentation and 2) a conversation on the topics given below. Students will be given 1 min to get ready for each task.

For the first part of the exam, students will be expected to give a 3-min talk on one of the topics.

During the second part of the exam, students will engage in a conversation with the examiner.

TALK, DO NO READ! (you may have notes, but not for reading)

3min: Presentation Topics (one to be chosen at the exam; prepare all three)

1. Describe your own, your family members', and your friends' everyday travel experiences. Be as detailed as possible.
2. You are planning a trip of your life. Describe your preparations, also stating what you would do during your trip. Make sure you use the phrases to describe process (спочатку/ спершу, потім, після цього/ того, тоді, насамкінець). Be very specific and creative.
3. You had either a terrific or the worst weekend ever travelling and visiting several places. Describe this weekend in detail. Make sure you use the phrases to describe process (спочатку/ спершу, потім, після цього/ того, тоді, насамкінець). Be creative.

5 min Conversation Topics (one to be chosen at the exam; prepare both)

1. You are with your friend. Discuss your music preferences.

2. You are at the doctor's. Talk about your health problems in detail. The doctor listens to you, asks you questions and writes out a prescription.