



International Conference The Future of Education



ANADOLU ÜNİVERSİTESİ

COURSE DESIGN FOR CULTURALLY DIVERSE LEARNERS

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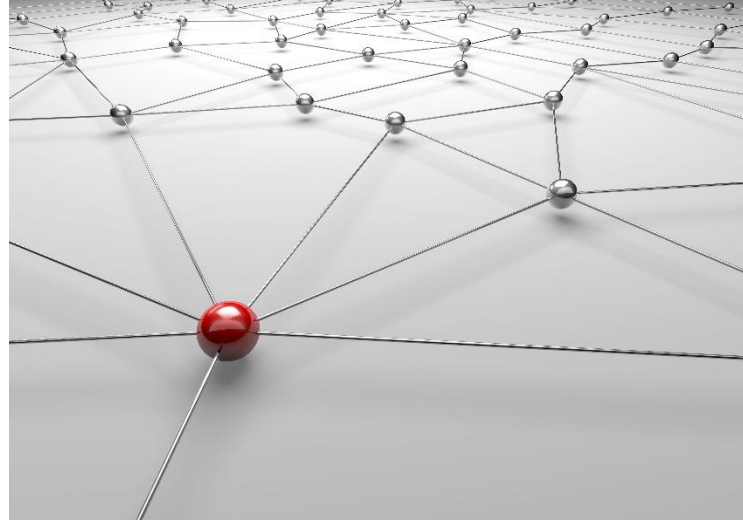
June 11, 2015 Florence

Outline

- ▶ Cultural differences in online courses
- ▶ Design principles
- ▶ Research question
- ▶ Methodology
- ▶ Findings
- ▶ Discussion

Introduction

- ▶ Information and Communication Technologies
- ▶ Network society
- ▶ Multiculturalism in distance learning environments
- ▶ Massive Online Open Course (MOOCs)



Culture

- ▶ Hofstede “... the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others”
- ▶ Gunawardena culture is diverse, changing, and concrete as well as abstract, the implications for its potential impact on communication at a distance become increasingly complex



Theoretical Frameworks for Cultural Differences in Online Courses

- ▶ Gunawardena's Model (AMOEBA)
 - ▶ Adaptive Meaningful, Organic, Environmental-Based Architecture for online Course Design:
 - ▶ Language Choice,
 - ▶ Format Choices,
 - ▶ Communication Channels,
 - ▶ Activity Choices,
 - ▶ Method Choices,
 - ▶ Knowledge Construction.

Badrul Khan's checklist;

cultural diversity

geographical diversity,

learner diversity,

bias,

digital divide,

etiquette

language

legal issues,

social and political issues,

learning style differences,

content design,

instructional strategies,

previous experiences,

interface design,

navigation,

evaluation and feedback options,

technological issues,

orientation,

non-verbal communication
strategies

About the Research : e-Learning portal of Anadolu University

- ▶ 11 bachelors degree,
- ▶ 30 associate degree programs,
- ▶ students in Turkey, Northern Cyprus, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Macedonia and 7 Western European countries.

<http://eogrenme.anadolu.edu.tr/>



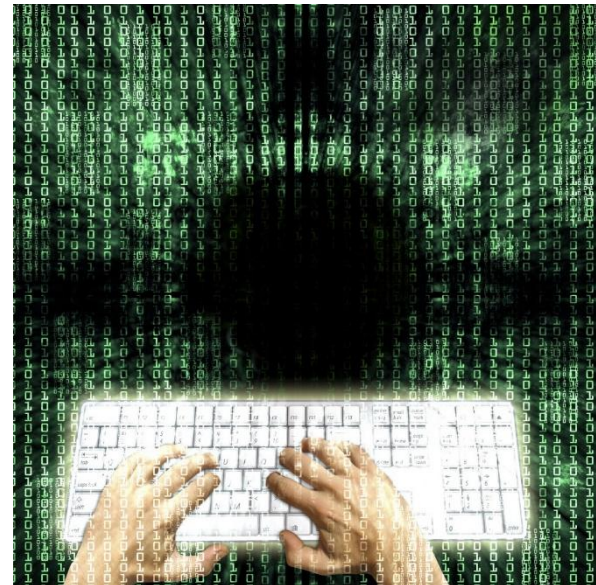
Methodology

- ▶ Open Education e-Learning Portal (<http://eogrenme.anadolu.edu.tr/>)
- ▶ Interactive e-Book,
- ▶ pdf e-Book,
- ▶ e-Seminar (webinar),
- ▶ summary presentation videos,
- ▶ e-Exams (trial tests),
- ▶ e-Exercises
- ▶ videoconference lectures, audio books, face-to-face academic counselling lectures, TV lectures



Methodology

- ▶ Case-study: Qualitative and quantitative methods
- ▶ Focus grup interview (semi-structured open-ended questions)
- ▶ 24 questionnaire items
- ▶ 81 students in Azerbaijan, Baku



Findings and Discussion

- ▶ 90% of 81 learners actively use the portal
- ▶ frequency of use (daily, weekly, monthly): weekly use (34%), daily use (32%)
- ▶ most preferred materials: books, lecturing videos, e-Book, exercises and videoconferencing, Interactive e-Book, e-Seminar (webinars)
- ▶ 'books and other printed materials are more convenient as primary study materials in terms of portability, usability and cultural fit, compared with computer materials'
- ▶ students abstain from interaction

Findings and Discussion

- ▶ difficulty about attending to the e-Seminars (webinars): 39% of the participants time difference;
- ▶ difficulty to achieve course materials: 38% of participants technical limitations
- ▶ 40% do not point to such difficulties
- ▶ 34% do not have any “prior” e-Learning experience
- ▶ language does not cause any specific difficulty (70%)
 - ▶ understand the jargon, idioms, analogies or expressions used in the course materials and activities
 - ▶ comprehending the visuals such as navigational icons, images, graphics, signs or symbols used in the course materials and activities.

Findings and Discussion

- ▶ On cultural sensitivity: half of the respondents state ‘courses present more than one point of view on controversial issues’
- ▶ ‘course activities have a structure responsive to different backgrounds and learning styles of learners’
- ▶ 60% of the participants need a guide about using the materials such as videos, e-Book, interactive e-Book, exercises in the portal
- ▶ the learners’ satisfaction with communication via videoconferencing 74%, communication via e-Seminar 64%, communication via e-Mail 61%, communication via academic consultancy 56%, communication social network is 45%, phone calls to bureau in Baku 33%
- ▶ 69% of the participants: presenting the course materials in multilanguage format could be useful

Conclusion

- ▶ interest, need, expectation and cultural diversity of learners
- ▶ individual learning methods and self-study materials
- ▶ less interest for interaction (collaborative learning)
- ▶ time difference (geographical diversity)
- ▶ face-to-face academic counselling sessions

Conclusion

- ▶ multilingual formats in course design
- ▶ terminology dictionary
- ▶ expression styles used in courses and activities
- ▶ guides
- ▶ face-to-face communication, like videoconferencing, e-Seminars

Thank you