

# REMOTE TEACHING IN RUSSIA UNDER COVID-19 LOCKDOWN: PROS AND CONS

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## Abstract

In the spring of 2017, Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication of Kazan Federal University hosted the web conference "Have a Hoot with Kahoot!" for its students. The presenter was a professor from the US University. For the first time, students were given an opportunity to take part in the live communication with an American educator across the Atlantic Ocean. Russian students got acquainted with the unique and unknown to them technology Kahoot! which is actively used in teaching foreign languages abroad. That way did distant teaching start in the Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication. Further on, there were held a good number of other on-line events. Those on-line classes were new, interesting and appealing to students and teachers. But these classes were just episodes: it was not a system, for there had always been practiced face-to-face teaching on campus. The COVID-19 pandemic has changed everything. On-line classes become systematic arousing a series of new challenges that underlie remote teaching, and turn out to be a must. Teaching moves on-line on an untested and unprecedented scale.

The goal of this study is to investigate how the pandemic affects the educational system in Russia. The research question is: What advantages and disadvantages does remote teaching have in students' and teachers' eyes? Literature review shows that although each scholar touches upon both positive and negative aspects of distance education, all of them agree on the following. While organizing and conducting remote teaching, teachers ought to remember that:

- the focus should be on pedagogy and learning, rather than technology;
- all the tools still require the skill, experience and expertise of a teacher: good teachers might use bad technologies or use technologies badly and bad teachers can use good technologies;
- the tools teachers choose should be in line with any school e-Safety policy [23].

In this study, the leading research method is a web-based questionnaire, which allows the authors to collect definitive and objective data to quantify attitudes of nearly 4,000 respondents (university students and teachers) to remote teaching. The questionnaire is designed in a manner to legitimize the behavior and trust of the respondents. A rating scale type of questions provides for simplifying and quantifying the attitude and/ or behavior of the respondents, e.g., The COVID-19 pandemic is first and foremost a health crisis: Strongly Disagree; Disagree; Neither agree nor disagree; Agree; Strongly Agree; e.g., Are you satisfied with the fact that traditional exams are replaced with online assessment tools?: Very satisfied; Satisfied; Neutral; Dissatisfied; Very Dissatisfied.

A quantitative research is chosen to quantify a problem and understand how prevalent it is by looking for results that can be projected to a larger population and in this way to help see the big picture. A mathematical tool to derive results from the collected data is implemented.

This quantitative research results in getting the answer to the question "Does teaching remotely have only minuses, or does it also have its pluses?" The answer is: "Both". The paper also presents a description of University teachers and students' experiences of on-line teaching and learning.

**Key words:** advantages and disadvantages of distant teaching, effects of COVID-19 lockdown on the educational system, implementations and limitations of remote teaching, on-line classes in the digital learning environments.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

On-line teaching in the Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication of Kazan Federal University had been "a rare bird" before the COVID-19 pandemic attack. The Institution hosted a number of web conferences and seminars for its students and faculty. One of the first webinars, conducted by the professor from the US University, took place in 2017 when the third year students directly communicated with an American educator across the Atlantic. Students – future teachers of foreign languages – were offered a new format of learning and quite a new topic: they got acquainted with a novel technology Kahoot!. In addition, students got their chance to ask questions about the methods of teaching foreign languages in the United States. All the participants of the webinar came to the conclusion that it would be useful to have on-line classes on a regular basis. *At that point they*

*were not aware that in the near future their dream would come true!* Since then there have been organized and held a good many of other on-line projects, among them a webinar with Bryan Alexander [1], the ex-director of research for the National Institute for Technology in Liberal Education headquartered at Southwestern University (Georgetown, US), when we – students and faculty – were first introduced to digital storytelling, and got excited to know a rather simple thing: the more compelling your story, the more likely your audience is to receive it, listen to it, and take it seriously. One more on-line project was piloted for pre-service teachers (majoring in English as a foreign language) of the Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication of Kazan Federal University (Russian Federation) and pre-service teachers of College of Education of Purdue University (USA) aimed at developing a greater understanding of others' cultures and practices in teaching elementary, middle, or secondary school students, and a more internationalized perspective on teaching and learning. The participants of the project had to discuss different topics in one-on-one online communication with an E-Pal partner via email and by Skype and ask questions about teaching practice experience and respond to E-Pal partners' questions. After the participation in Pre-service Teachers E-Pal project, students exchanged their opinions having written a two page reflection paper. In this way remote teaching started in the Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication at Kazan Federal University. These on-line events were new and engaging: they appealed both to students and teachers. But they were episodic: COVID-19 made on-line classes systematic; and it aroused unanticipated challenges: teaching remotely became a must, and teachers had to deal with new learning environment.

This study presents a quantitative research which was conducted with the aim in view to quantify attitudes of nearly 4,000 university students and teachers to remote teaching, and to figure out how the pandemic has affected the educational system in Russia. Moreover, the authors make an attempt to answer the question "What are advantages and disadvantages of remote teaching?" The paper also presents teachers and students' experiences of on-line teaching and learning.

## **2. METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Theoretical and methodological foundations**

Literature review makes it possible to question how well remote teaching is organized in this country and what perspectives and concerns teaching remotely brings about, regardless of the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown.

Researchers specializing in the future of education advocate for the need of distant education development in Russia with an eye on the impact of technology [2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10]. In these works, new or transformed technologies are addressed, including virtual reality. Khusyainov [11] describes the main characteristics of mass open online course (MOOC) and highly recommends MOOC as a universal educational technology. Kalacheva [12] insists on using the Moodle learning platform considering it to be the efficient and multi-faceted tool in the educational space of any modern university. For those who are trying to figure out how to use cool new tools to make a real dent in the world around us, Ivanchenko [13] suggests incorporating as many technologies as possible in his book, which combines history, analysis, and practical guidance. A few investigators give ready tools to support remote teaching and learning such as webinars and online training [14, 15, 16]. The proponents of remote teaching Zatytkin, Trusov, Tyurina, and Yurkov [17] assert that distance education is student-centered as it personalizes teaching and meets the balance of personalizing and standardizing. One more plus of distance education is highlighted by Kalinina [18] who underlines the role of self-education in distance learning due to its being incorporated into the life long learning system. Chernetskaya [19] and Khusyainov [20] also regard the need of distance education development in Russia to be a prioritizing direction. Quite a lot of practitioners speculate on how to teach and learn when school is closed offering great insight into how to bring digital reality to students of all subject areas [21, 22]. Pyanzina [23] concludes that distance teaching quality depends on distance education teacher's competence. Brief literature review shows that all scholars highlight both positive and negative aspects of remote teaching,

### **2.2 Research goal and question**

The goal of this study is to research how the COVID-19 lockdown affects the educational system in Russia. The research question in this study is: Does remote teaching have only minuses, or does it also have its pluses?

## 2.3 Research methods

In this study, the leading research method was a web-based questionnaire, one of the ruling and most trusted methods for internet-based research or online research used for quantitative data collection. The authors applied a web-based questionnaire due to its flexibility: respondents were free to fill in the survey questionnaire in their free time using any device which was at their disposal (a desktop, laptop, tablet, or mobile). This proven method helped the authors to collect objective data to quantify attitudes of 3,676 students and 315 teachers to distance learning and teaching. A rating scale type of questions, that made the bulk of the questionnaire, helped to simplify and quantify the attitude and/ or behavior of the respondents. The collected data were processed in numbers and percentages.

## 2.4 Research Site

Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication of Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University (Russian Federation).

## 2.5. Research participants

3,676 students and 315 teachers of the Institute of Philology and Intercultural Communication of Kazan (Volga Region) Federal University took part in this study.

## RESULTS

3,676 students and 315 teachers were interviewed. The obtained data are presented in Table 1 and Table 2 below:

*Table 1. Respondents demographic data.*

Status	Number	Gender	Ethnicity	Age
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Tatars (n=803/50.0%)	Under 20 (n=901/56.1%)
			Russians (n=696/43.3%)	20-25 (n=644/40.1%)
		Female (n=2,070/56.3%)	Others (n=107/6.7%)	More than 25 (n=61/3.8%)
			Russians (n=1005/48.6%)	Under 20 (n=1207/58.3%)
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Tatars (n=995/48.1%)	20-25 (n=827/40.0%)
			Russians (n=10/14.1%)	More than 25 (n=36/1.7%)
			Others (n=70/3.3%)	25-35 (n=6/8.5%)
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Tatars (n=57/80.3%)	36-45 (n=41/57.7%)
			Russians (n=10/14.1%)	46-65 (n=21/29.6%)
			Others (n=4/5.6%)	More than 65 (n=3/4.2%)
			Tatars (n=143/58.6%)	25-35 (n=58/23.8%)
			Russians (n=90/36.9%)	36-45 (n=112/45.9%)
			Others (n=11/4.56%)	46-60 (n=63/25.8%)
				More than 60 (n=11/4.5%)

*Table 2. Obtained data on the basis of the respondents' answers.*

1: The COVID-19 pandemic is first and foremost a health crisis.				
Status	Respondents	Gender	Responses	
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Strongly Disagree (n=159/9.9%)	
			Disagree (n=482/30.0%)	
		Female (n=2,070/56.3%)	Neither agree nor disagree (n=241/15.0%)	
			Agree (n=591/36.8%)	
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Strongly Agree (n=133/8.3%)	
			Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%)	
			Disagree (n=414/20.0%)	
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Neither agree nor disagree (n=552/26.7%)	
			Agree (n=1004/48.5%)	
			Strongly Agree (n=100/4.8%)	
			Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%)	
			Disagree (n=0/0.0%)	
			Neither agree nor disagree (n=11/15.5%)	

			Agree (n=60/84.5%) Strongly Agree (n=0/0.0%)
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=0/0.0%) Agree (n=201/82.4%) Strongly Agree (n=43/17.6%)
2: Platform MS Teams we work on does not allow teachers to see every student in the classroom until he /she starts to speak, but it is perfectly suitable for organizing individual consultations.			
Status	Respondents	Gender	Responses
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=162/10.1%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=621/38.7%) Agree (n=641/39.9%) Strongly Agree (n=182/11.3%)
		Female (n=2,070/56.3%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=226/10.9%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=638/30.8%) Agree (n=1004/48.5%) Strongly Agree (n=202/9.8%)
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=9/12.7%) Agree (n=58/81.7%) Strongly Agree (n=4/5.6%)
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=0/0.0%) Agree (n=235/96.3%) Strongly Agree (n=9/3.7%)
3: Kazan Federal University managed to successfully conduct all the exams online in the spring of 2020.			
Status	Respondents	Gender	Responses
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=2/0.1%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=19/1.2%) Agree (n=1070/66.6%) Strongly Agree (n=515/32.1%)
		Female (n=2,070/56.3%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=33/1.6%) Agree (n=1902/91.9%) Strongly Agree (n=135/6.5%)
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=7/9.9%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=0/0.0%) Agree (n=64/90.1%) Strongly Agree (n=0/0.0%)
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=11/4.5%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=33/13.5%) Agree (n=200/82.0%) Strongly Agree (n=0/0.0%)
4: Social distancing is easy in theory but in practice it takes a toll on our minds.			
Status	Respondents	Gender	Responses
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=19/1.2%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=78/4.9%)

			Agree (n=606/37.7%) Strongly Agree (n=903/56.2%)
		Female (n=2,070/56.3%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=8/0.4%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=119/5.7%) Agree (n=1064/51.4%) Strongly Agree (n=879/42.5%)
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=25/35.2%) Agree (n=46/64.8%) Strongly Agree (n=0/0.0%)
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=40/16.4%) Agree (n=204/83.6%) Strongly Agree (n=0/0.0%)

5: Staying physically active is a challenge when you're at home for weeks on end. Moreover, staying at home for long periods can lead to increased stress and anxiety.

Status	Respondents	Gender	Responses
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Strongly Disagree (n=87/5.4%) Disagree (n=321/20.0%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=176/11.0%) Agree (n=539/33.6%) Strongly Agree (n=483/30.0%)
		Female (n=2,070/56.3%)	Strongly Disagree (n=107/5.2%) Disagree (n=328/15.8%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=304/14.7%) Agree (n=758/36.6%) Strongly Agree (n=573/27.7%)
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=6/8.5%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=13/18.3%) Agree (n=52/73.2%) Strongly Agree (n=0/0.0%)
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=2/0.8%) Disagree (n=61/25.0%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=87/35.7%) Agree (n=92/37.7%) Strongly Agree (n=2/0.8%)

6: There are some benefits of online learning, for example, saving on time and money.

Status	Respondents	Gender	Responses
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=53/3.3%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=63/3.9%) Agree (n=559/34.8%) Strongly Agree (n=931/58.0%)
		Female (n=2,070/56.3%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=102/4.9%) Agree (n=969/46.8%) Strongly Agree (n=999/48.3%)
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=24/33.8%) Agree (n=47/66.2%) Strongly Agree (n=0/0.0%)

		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=1/0.4%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=32/13.1%) Agree (n=211/86.5%) Strongly Agree (n=0/0.0%)
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7: Physically challenged students can study from home comfortably and unobtrusively without encountering all the usual challenges they may face in an on-campus educational institution.

Status	Respondents	Gender	Responses
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=361/22.5%) Agree (n=830/51.7%) Strongly Agree (n=415/25.8%)
		Female (n=2,070/56.3%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=0/0.0%) Agree (n=2001/96.7%) Strongly Agree (n=69/3.3%)
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=4/5.6%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=10/14.1%) Agree (n=57/80.3%) Strongly Agree (n=0/0.0%)
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=5/2.1%) Agree (n=124/50.8%) Strongly Agree (n=115/47.1%)

8: A lot of free teaching resources have become available.

Status	Respondents	Gender	Responses
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=121/7.5%) Agree (n=1024/63.8%) Strongly Agree (n=461/28.7%)
		Female (n=2,070/56.3%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=14/0.7%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=222/10.7%) Agree (n=1056/51.0%) Strongly Agree (n=778/37.6%)
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=7/9.9%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=0/0.0%) Agree (n=63/88.7%) Strongly Agree (n=1/1.4%)
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=21/8.6%) Agree (n=203/83.2%) Strongly Agree (n=20/8.2%)

9: Online teaching and learning cause extra expenditures on electricity bills, products etc.

Status	Respondents	Gender	Responses
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Strongly Disagree (n=88/5.5%) Disagree (n=409/25.5%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=264/16.4%) Agree (n=728/45.3%) Strongly Agree (n=117/7.3%)

		Female (n=20,070/54.7%)	Strongly Disagree (n=112/5.4%) Disagree (n=530/25.6%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=340/16.4%) Agree (n=938/45.3%) Strongly Agree (n=150/7.3%)
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=7/9.9%) Disagree (n=18/25.3%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=8/11.2%) Agree (n=31/43.7%) Strongly Agree (n=7/9.9%)
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=12/4.9%) Disagree (n=64/26.2%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=39/16.0%) Agree (n=108/44.3%) Strongly Agree (n=21/8.6%)

10: For elderly teachers online teaching seems a daunting task.

Status	Respondents	Gender	Responses
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=233/14.5%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=845/52.6%) Agree (n=380/23.7%) Strongly Agree (n=148/9.2%)
		Female (n=2,070/56.3%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=299/14.4%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=1090/52.7%) Agree (n=496/24.0%) Strongly Agree (n=185/8.9%)
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=9/12.7%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=37/52.1%) Agree (n=19/26.7%) Strongly Agree (n=6/8.5%)
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Strongly Disagree (n=0/0.0%) Disagree (n=36/14.8%) Neither agree nor disagree (n=125/51.2%) Agree (n=58/23.8%) Strongly Agree (n=25/10.2%)

11: Are you satisfied with the fact that traditional exams are replaced with online assessment tools?

Status	Respondents	Gender	Responses
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Very satisfied (n=272/16.9%) Satisfied (n=475/29.6%) Neutral (n=703/43.8%) Dissatisfied (n=65/4.0%) Very Dissatisfied (n=91/5.7%)
		Female (n=2,070/56.3%)	Very satisfied (n=345/16.7%) Satisfied (n=613/29.6%) Neutral (n=921/44.5%) Dissatisfied (n=71/3.4%) Very Dissatisfied (n=120/5.8%)
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Very satisfied (n=13/18.3%) Satisfied (n=20/28.2%) Neutral (n=29/40.8%) Dissatisfied (n=6/8.5%) Very Dissatisfied (n=3/4.2%)
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Very satisfied (n=36/14.8%) Satisfied (n=64/26.2%) Neutral (n=124/50.8%) Dissatisfied (n=8/3.3%)

Very Dissatisfied (n=12/4.9%)

12: How far are you satisfied that many assessments have simply been cancelled?

Status	Respondents	Gender	Responses
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Very satisfied (n=155/9.7%) Satisfied (n=298/18.6%) Neutral (n=762/47.4%) Dissatisfied (n=325/20.2%) Very Dissatisfied (n=66/4.1%)
		Female (n=2,070/56.3%)	Very satisfied (n=185/8.9%) Satisfied (n=370/17.9%) Neutral (n=1032/49.9%) Dissatisfied (n=408/19.7%) Very Dissatisfied (n=75/3.6%)
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Very satisfied (n=7/9.9%) Satisfied (n=13/18.3%) Neutral (n=33/46.5%) Dissatisfied (n=14/19.7%) Very Dissatisfied (n=4/5.6%)
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Very satisfied (n=22/9.0%) Satisfied (n=44/18.0%) Neutral (n=118/48.4%) Dissatisfied (n=51/20.9%) Very Dissatisfied (n=9/3.7%)

13: Are you satisfied with the way Kazan Federal University manages to conduct on-line classes?

Status	Respondents	Gender	Responses
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Very satisfied (n=585/36.4%) Satisfied (n=583/36.3%) Neutral (n=263/16.4%) Dissatisfied (n=117/7.3%) Very Dissatisfied (n=58/3.6%)
		Female (n=2,070/56.3%)	Very satisfied (n=748/36.1%) Satisfied (n=755/36.5%) Neutral (n=341/16.5%) Dissatisfied (n=151/7.3%) Very Dissatisfied (n=75/3.6%)
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Very satisfied (n=25/35.2%) Satisfied (n=29/40.9%) Neutral (n=12/16.9%) Dissatisfied (n=3/4.2%) Very Dissatisfied (n=2/2.8%)
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Very satisfied (n=84/34.4%) Satisfied (n=85/34.8%) Neutral (n=47/19.3%) Dissatisfied (n=18/7.4%) Very Dissatisfied (n=10/4.1%)

14: How far are satisfied with the social life and learning processing at Kazan Federal University under lockdown?

Status	Respondents	Gender	Responses
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Very satisfied (n=238/14.8%) Satisfied (n=621/38.7%) Neutral (n=408/25.4%) Dissatisfied (n=321/20.0%) Very Dissatisfied (n=18/1.1%)
		Female (n=2,070/56.3%)	Very satisfied (n=301/14.5%) Satisfied (n=789/38.1%) Neutral (n=527/25.5%)



			Dissatisfied (n=420/20.3%) Very Dissatisfied (n=33/1.6%)
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Very satisfied (n=11/15.5%) Satisfied (n=28/39.4%) Neutral (n=18/25.4%) Dissatisfied (n=11/15.5%) Very Dissatisfied (n=3/4.2%)
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Very satisfied (n=49/20.1%) Satisfied (n=31/12.7%) Neutral (n=72/29.5%) Dissatisfied (n=58/23.8%) Very Dissatisfied (n=34/13.9%)
15: How far are you satisfied with remote teaching?			
Status	Respondents	Gender	Responses
Students	n=3,676	Male (n=1,606/43.7%)	Very satisfied (n=526/32.8%) Satisfied (n=409/25.5%) Neutral (n=293/18.2%) Dissatisfied (n=321/20.0%) Very Dissatisfied (n=57/3.5%)
		Female (n=2,070/56.3%)	Very satisfied (n=669/32.3%) Satisfied (n=543/26.2%) Neutral (n=380/18.4%) Dissatisfied (n=401/19.4%) Very Dissatisfied (n=77/3.7%)
Teachers	n=315	Male (n=71/22.5%)	Very satisfied (n=26/36.6%) Satisfied (n=18/25.4%) Neutral (n=11/15.5%) Dissatisfied (n=14/19.7%) Very Dissatisfied (n=2/2.8%)
		Female (n=244/77.5%)	Very satisfied (n=79/32.4%) Satisfied (n=64/26.2%) Neutral (n=44/18.0%) Dissatisfied (n=48/19.7%) Very Dissatisfied (n=9/3.7%)

Covid-19 contributed to the global lockdown of education institutions causing major interruption in students' learning; disruptions in internal assessments; and the cancellation of public assessments for qualifications or their replacement by an inferior alternative.

Here are the obstacles Russian teachers faced during this pandemic.

1) There is little or no face-to-face interaction with online learning. This is something that requires getting used to. In our case, we found it specifically hard, for the platform MS Teams we worked on did not allow us to see every student in a class until he /she started to speak. But it is perfectly suitable for organizing individual consultations.

2) The closure of universities not only interrupted the teaching for students; it coincided with a key assessment period and many exams were postponed. Certainly, it fostered the assessment format to be changed. Our University managed to successfully conduct all the exams online. However, we faced the problem of filling in the reporting documentation online since our University resorts to the paper-based versions of credit books and assessment sheets. As a result, it took some time for the authorities to approve the procedure of collecting assessment data. This was a new area for both teachers and students, and assessments had larger measurement error than usual.

3) Lack of appropriate equipment for students and teachers.

4) The fourth obstacle is connected with a question "How can elderly teachers adjust to teaching online during Covid-19?" Undoubtedly, that was a daunting task for this group of people to get used to working online as it demanded much effort on their part to become a computer-literate person.

5) Sedentary lifestyle: immobility for hours on end can lead to some health problems. Social distancing is easy in theory but in practice, it takes a toll on our minds. Staying physically active is a challenge when you're at home for weeks on end. Moreover, staying at home for long periods can lead to increased stress and anxiety. This is where we tried to stay physically active by staying calm and taking all the necessary precautions during the corona virus pandemic.

However, we can see some benefits of online learning:

- 1) Saving on time and money and reduced costs: no commuting, no cost of expensive school-related supplies, etc.
- 2) Students have access to an education anywhere, without limitations, restrictions, and location of study.
- 3) For elderly teachers, working with a computer and learning internet skills was a valuable experience opening up networking opportunities that could be further applied to other facets of life.
- 4) Physically challenged students can study from home comfortably and unobtrusively without encountering all the usual challenges they may face in an on-campus educational institution. No dress code, casual style is allowed. In fact, we can assume that students have become more organized, diligent and prompt as some of them are working, they could successfully combine work and study.
- 5) The shift in education also means that more opportunities arise, e.g. a lot of free teaching resources have become available.

As for students, who belong to the Z generation, not many of them felt dissatisfied with teaching being moved online. Nevertheless, they also pointed out some minuses of distance education:

- sedentary lifestyle
- no active social life
- extra expenditures on electricity bills
- lack of appropriate equipment (in case there are two or more students in a family)
- no Internet access or Wi-Fi weak signal
- no camera
- the demonstrated teaching materials (pictures) were marred with a lot of interferences
- some other minor technical issues.

## CONCLUSIONS

The quantitative research was conducted with a view to getting an answer to the question “Does teaching remotely have only minuses, or does it also have its pluses?” The answer is “For sure, it has both”. Teachers learned to internationally collaborate exchanging their experience, discussing concerns and perspectives of remote teaching and learning. Students and teachers learned to live in the tech savvy world very fast: COVID accelerated this process. But still on-line classes cannot substitute for face-to-face ones. Both teachers and students have been longing for interaction in the classroom. Academic communities have always needed to share their passion for teaching during in-person meetings, for *that* format brings about warmth and intimate collaboration and makes a relationship between a university and a student more personal.

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