**Going online in Covid-19**

An empirical research of student’s preferences concerning digital learning material in 2020-21

**Key words:** Educational Philosophy, Distance Teaching and Learning, Visual Educational Material, Multimodality, Digital Reading

**Abstract**: According to modern educational philosophy, the aim of education should be understanding. (Lankshear, Peters, and Knobel 2000; Watson 2016) Several scientific research have already discussed the topics of understanding digital-multimodal contents (Baron 2015; Blair 2014; Groarke 2015; Mitchell 2009). The unfortunate pandemic situation since 2019 triggered the significance of this issue, because teachers had to adapt their teaching material to the digital environment. In our ongoing quantitative mini research, we examine to what extent this endeavour achieved. Subjects of the research are those BA/BSc and MA/MSc students (approx. 1000-1500) of Budapest University of Technology and Economics (BUTE, Hungary) who had to struggle with distance learning in the academic year of 2020-21. How did students learn digital and multimodal educational material; what were the main digital features that best supported their knowledge acquisition, understanding and learning processes; and which were the most preferred and effective types, formats, and visual layouts of the distributed contents according to lecture types and subject fields? Based on the results, we claim that educators must take into consideration students' opinion, needs and expectations if they would like to create effective and useful digital learning material. According to our hypothesis, the required and wished level of students’ learning cannot be reached without modifying the standard teaching material or creating and applying new multimodal learning contents for digital platforms. The aim of our research is to specify these desired and necessary modifications shown by our research data and provide suggestions to university educators for creating effective digital and multimodal teaching material for their students.