THE BENEFITS OF BLENDED LEARNING MODELS IN TEACHING ESP

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PROBLEM STATEMENT.

Globalization and internationalization of higher education make their adjustments to the structure and content of ESP learning process. Bertaria Sohnata Hutauruk states that ESP is designed to meet the specific needs for learners, makes use of special underlying methodology and activities, is centred not only on language aspects such as grammar, lexis or register, but also skills, ie discourses and genres appropriate to those activities. “ESP practitioners are also becoming increasingly involved in intercultural communication and the development of intercultural competence” [1]. Integration processes in Ukrainian society and education led to increased demand for professionals with knowledge of English.

ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS.

Knowledge of English enables students to realize their social and professional mobility. Jack C. Richards notes that “opportunities to learn English are provided in many different ways such as through formal instruction, travel, study abroad, as well as through the media and the Internet. The worldwide demand for English has created an enormous demand for quality language teaching and language teaching materials and resources” [5]. Therefore, in studying ESP emphasizes professionalisation of teaching, students’ use of foreign language knowledge as a professional. The urgency of the problem is determined by the opportunity through the integration of blended learning models into the education system, that was outlined in writings of such scholars as B.S. Hutauruk [1], C. Latchem [2], G. Motteram [3], J.C. Richards [5], K. Thorne [6], B. Tomlinson, C. Whittaker [7] and others. In their works authors consider blended learning as an educational concept that combines individual online learning and teacher-led group classes, combining traditional techniques and current technologies.

THE PURPOSE OF THE ARTICLE.

To analyze the benefits of blended learning in educational process and to identify the main aims and strategies of blended learning that should be taken into account in order to improve ESP teaching.

THE MAIN MATERIAL.

At its core, blended learning is a combination of traditional classroom and modern digital education. “Learning technologies are reported to help extend teaching-learning flexibility” [7]. With this form of study, students are able to familiarize themselves with the material required for the lesson through the Internet and gadgets before, during and after classes. Colin Latchem notes that for gaining maximum advantage from both face-to-face and mediated teaching and learning, it is advisable to take courses through blended learning. “These combine face-to-face teaching or activity-based learning in classroom, outdoor, community and workplace settings and computer-based or online learning. The digital means and

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resources are used to supplement or revise the face-to-face learning, or, in the case of “flipped learning,” studied prior to and in preparation for onsite teaching, tutoring or small group sessions” [2].

In blended learning, modern educational online services, learning platforms, training and educational projects, virtual labs, cloud multimedia applications are used. “The blended mode enables an enhanced learning experience by enabling diverse learning environments, thus fostering reinforcement, increasing accessibility of learning materials; and helping to build a sense of community and collaboration through the collaborative and communication platforms of the wiki and forums for sharing experiences of learning” [7]. Blended learning also applies Facebook, Bloglines, web sites, digital audio and video tools, podcasts, PowerPoint presentations etc. Mixed learning models such as rotational, a la carte, virtual, flex are also embraced. Envisaging flexible learning Colin Latchem indicates that “it places the learners in primary control. It offers them choices in the where, when, how, for how long and by what means of study, according to their needs and circumstances” [2]. With this method, students can learn by such ways and means as face-to-face, online, blended, full-time, part-time and accelerated or decelerated. The author adds that “flexible learning is useful for serving a wide and diverse range of students and achieving a competitive advantage for training organisations and employers by delivering training in international, national, regional and remote areas in forms and ways that best suit the learners’ styles, needs, work schedules and circumstances” [2]. Gary Motteram denotes that students must be engaged in a teacher-led question and answer session, “watch a video, research using books and the internet, take part in a role play or debate and “manipulate displayed images. And it is also quite important and effective in studying ESP. Colin Latchem also observes virtual reality exactly that “enables learning from accurate and realistic 3D models of machines, equipment, planetary systems and other phenomena in safe, more convenient and better controlled environments” [2]. The author points out that the use of virtual reality is a more sophisticated system, allowing students to see, feel and manipulate displayed images. And it is also quite important and effective in studying ESP.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS.

These types of activities in classroom construct a creative personality with intellectual activity, develop communication skills and increase the learning activity thoroughly. In general, it is promising to teach the material, taking into account the modern methods of teaching ESP and latest teaching technologies. After all, such teaching promotes team interaction between teachers and students, carries out preliminary preparation for further work, as well as parsing interesting cases, attracting media content instead of explaining basic concepts, and creates access to materials at any time.
References:


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