



THE ROLE AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF BLENDED LEARNING IN TEACHING AND LEARNING FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Mukhtorova Dilrabo Fazliddin kizi

dilya.muxtorova.92@gmail.com, Teacher, Uzbekistan state world
languages university, Faculty of English philology
<https://www.doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.8009089>

ARTICLE INFO

Received: 27th May 2023
Accepted: 05th June 2023
Online: 06th June 2023

KEY WORDS

Blended learning, methodological basis, distance learning, synergetic approach, self-learning, selfeducation, advantages, disadvantages.

ABSTRACT

In this article, the advantages and disadvantages of blended learning, its wide application in education, as well as its application to the educational process based on foreign experiences, are presented. Traditional educational system is slowly adapted to fast technological changes in the contemporary information-oriented society. So, constant refreshment and improvement the content and methods of teaching are needed to prepare "new generation engineers" who will be capable to take responsibilities in decision making, capable to apply critical thinking and creative approaches to their work. These all imply to be strongly committed to self-development and lifelong learning. Apart these skills, the crucial competence of engineers is the ability to use at least one foreign language, very often it is English, as a tool for professional communication in the national and international labour markets. In spite of understanding the language importance, Russia has problems with language competence that is expressed in low ability of young specialists to be involved into international projects and research.

Introduction.

Teaching foreign languages for professional purposes is considered to be the priority in updating engineering education in Russia. The ability to communicate in other languages is becoming an integral part of professional competence of any specialist, no difference what field he/she works in. With changing requirements to specialist training there is a need to overhaul the content and approaches to teaching foreign languages to nonlinguistic students.

In the frame of the limited class hours new methodological teaching approaches should be based on individualization or autonomy that will serve the purpose of recognizing commitment to lifelong learning. The popular motto of higher education nowadays is "to



learn how to learn". No university can graduate a specialist prepared to independent professional career; people become specialists in the process of their personal professional development. So, in this way, autonomy can be considered as a necessary condition, in which a student uses endless potential of a human brain and modern technologies, including information ones, to attain knowledge faster, with higher efficiency and less effort.

Methods and Materials.

Blended Learning Method . Blended learning is one of the widely used areas of modern education and was previously most actively used only for students of the correspondence department of the university, when students could simultaneously practically study their specialty and get theoretical knowledge. [9]. Given the current stage of development of society, it is assumed that the combination of traditional forms of teaching students in the classroom with elements of e-learning by themselves, in which special information technologies are used, such as computer graphics, audio and video, interactive elements will remain relevant in the future. The purpose of this paper is to consider blended learning as a synergistic interdisciplinary technology to answer the question how to improve the quality of training future technical specialists in a modern non-linguistic university using the example of teaching a foreign language, and if blended learning will allow more effective use of the advantages of full-time and e-learning, mutually compensating for the disadvantages of each of them [1]. The peculiarities of modern economic development in our country and the epidemiological situation with the coronavirus have led to the need to apply blended education not only in the correspondence department of the university, but also in full-time, too. Undoubtedly, one of the advantages of this type of training is the simultaneous acquisition of both practical and theoretical skills. While writing this article, we relied exclusively on practical experience of working with full-time and part-time students of our university, which allowed us to highlight the advantages and disadvantages of blended learning. In the course of practical work, we identified the following advantages:

1. unlimited time to receive feedback from the teacher, the possibility of interactive handling of educational materials (textbooks developed by the teachers of the department).
2. a large amount of information posted on electronic media.
3. hypertext structure of information presentation (the ability to add text prompts, compact placement of large amounts of information and grammatical comments to the texts).
4. when preparing materials for students' self-learning, they are offered texts on their specialty, which arouses their interest and motivates them to study professional vocabulary.
5. students develop the ability to creatively rethink available information.

Now let's consider some of the disadvantages of blended learning in educational process:

1. low degree of individualization.
2. low ability to communicate with classmates.
3. insufficient development of listening skills

The discipline "Foreign language" is included in the basic block of disciplines for teaching students, both fulltime and at the correspondence department of the Samara Technical University, carried out by the Department of Foreign Languages. The discipline is aimed at developing the ability of graduates to communicate orally and in writing in foreign



languages to solve the problems of interpersonal and intercultural interaction. The content of the discipline covers a complex of issues related to the professional orientation of the discipline "Foreign language", focused on the mastery of professional vocabulary in the profile of training. Teaching the discipline provides practical training and self-learning of students. The following types of control are used: current control of progress in completing assignments in practical classes and intermediate discipline control, which takes the form of a test or exam and includes testing in the Moodle distance learning system. The basic principle of building classes in classrooms with students can be characterized as learning through the action of learning-by-doing. That is, students do not engage in boring, inactive study of theory on the grammar of a foreign language in practical classes, but already directly apply their theoretical knowledge of grammar or vocabulary, acquired independently, while completing the teacher's tasks, which are predominantly communicative. The entire training program is based on a synergistic approach that contributes to the formation of students' value attitudes towards a foreign language. The program is designed so that students know the basic norms of a modern foreign language, they know how to use basic reference literature and dictionaries of a foreign language, have the skills to make literate and logically consistent dialogical and monologic statements in a foreign language and basic skills in translating specialty texts. This scheme or project for the course represents those types of communication exercises, in the course of which students consistently come to the achievement of the main task, namely, improving the quality of mastering a foreign language through action in a blended learning environment. The question is whether blended learning will make it possible to more effectively use the advantages of face-to-face and e-learning, mutually compensating for the disadvantages of each of them. Since the article has a practical focus, we analyze the use of blended learning methods in teaching foreign languages to full-time and part-time students at a technical university. The Department of Foreign Languages of the University has developed a whole series of teaching aids for both full-time and part-time students, including a variety of lexical and grammatical tasks for students of technical specialties. Practice shows that students are quite successful in this type of work. The blended learning program provides for a limited number of classroom hours compared to self-learning, which is given priority. Self-learning of students consists of studying additional literature recommended by the teacher and doing homework. The organization of independent work of students is combined with all teaching methods used in a technical university, and together with them it constitutes a single system of means of acquiring knowledge and developing skills. In addition, we invite students to take tests to assess their knowledge, skills and abilities.

Appearance of the information technologies in teaching foreign languages led to appearance of a relatively new method, called blended learning. The term is most commonly defined as a combination of online and face-to-face 2003; Based on the definition by C. Graham (2005) three components of blended learning can be singled out:

- face-to-face learning that represents a traditional format when instructors and students meet during classes;
- self-study learning that assumes different types of activities, such as search on the Internet, webquests, etc, performed by students unassisted;



- online collaborative learning
- an online cooperative work of students and instructors in forms of webinars, wikis, Skype conferences, etc.

For the needs of this article blended learning can be defined as a method of teaching that combines the most effective face-to-face teaching techniques and online interactive collaboration, both constituting a system that functions in constant correlation and forms a single environment.

The system will work effectively only if its components are balanced and methodically adequate to program educational objectives. In our opinion blended learning can be used to achieve the following pedagogic goals:

1. To prepare students to independent productive activity develop the following skills:

- constructive and algorithmic thinking;
- creative thinking due to decreasing the amount of reproductive activity;
- communicative skills on the basis of performing team projects;
- ability to find solutions in computer-simulated situations;
- research skills;
- skills of information culture and information processing.

2. To implement the social order:

- to prepare specialists to working with information technologies;
- to prepare specialists to independent lifelong learning by means of information technologies.

3. To intensify all levels of the educational process:

- to increase effectiveness and teaching quality due to the use of information technologies;
- to expose and use stimuli of cognitive activity promotion;
- to deepen interdisciplinary connections.

Many tutors agree that combining online elements with face-to-face instruction means that learners show better performance than if they do learning only in a traditional class environment. The article focuses on description of how to use the learning platforms that can be available through the Internet and what is the function of a tutor who uses these platforms as a tool for teaching English as a foreign language.

Discussion and Results.

Practices of Teaching with Moodle. Teachers do much for intensification the learning process in the condition of limited hours and in their attempt they address resources that are able to accumulate much information, be flexible in choice and mobile for constant upgrading. In other words, they appeal to resource able to organize the ground for students' self-working. Consider one of such resources in use, look at Moodle. This refers to a Virtual Learning Environment

and is one of the most effective learning tools. Moodle supports a learning model where a tutor acts as a course moderator. The platform provides an individual approach to each student by creating a virtual environment for group collaboration. For instance, at TPU we developed an English grammar module integrated into a General English course. This course was created for constant mastering of grammatical skills. In a theoretical part of the course



the rules are given in attempt to explain the essence of one or another grammatical phenomenon, and show its place in the language system. Students learn to analyze grammatical structures, define regularities and become aware of exceptions. This part of the course provides student's autonomy in learning and revising any material missed and badly acquired during guided lessons. A practical part of the course is devoted to working through and polishing grammar material of the theoretical part. The Moodle platform also enables flexible organization of the educational process. The platform gives an opportunity to focus on more complex sections of the course leaving simple pieces for self-study. Automation of the learning process can extremely facilitate teachers' work. All the results are checked and stored in the gradebook.

Multimedia effects are the next appealing component of Moodle courses. Besides the traditional textual and graphical information e-learning involves multimedia tools: animation, video, audio and color. This provides visualization of the teaching material and allows using most mechanisms of perception the new information by humans. However, Moodle environment has certain disadvantages. Computer-aided learning will never replace direct teacher-student interaction; pure e-learning is impersonal. Providing extensive automation of education, e-learning cannot take into account individual characteristics of students' intelligence and temper. This does not mean that the new technology should be rejected.

Individualized Instruction. On-line learning allows taking into account individual characteristics of students, thus creating optimal conditions for revealing their individual potential. Moodle assignments can be adjusted to students' individual needs and abilities, such as foreign language proficiency, memory capabilities and communication skills. These activities help weak students get engaged in a collaborative work and impose high requirements to the strong ones. The cyberspace can be more appealing to shy students, who feel more confident at home in front of their computers than in a classroom. Therefore, Moodle increases the level of activity of each student thus contributing to the efficiency of knowledge and skill acquisition in the process of learning a foreign language. Learning in Moodle environment contributes to development of student autonomy. Students become more active, demonstrate interest to the subject and teaching methods, and critically assess their skills through group discussion of problems and reasoning while defending their points of view. Student autonomy ensures transition from completing reproductive tasks to individualization of learning, characterized by high level of motivation.

Blended learning is focused on individualized instruction of each student and regular self-assessment through online collaboration. Stimulation of reflection is very important in this model. Reflection trains methods that helped in achieving the best results, promotes systematization and generalization of specific ways of activity. This method creates favorable conditions for integral development of students' personality and self-study

Conclusion .

Computer-mediated learning is becoming increasingly popular in teaching foreign languages. Modern students often expect online component or support as part of their course. Therefore many institutions offer online learning options to supplement face-to-face classes. Current research suggests that the best results come from a blended learning method.



Blended learning can be very timesaving and provides convenience and flexibility of learning. It has a tremendous potential in teaching foreign languages as it offers an opportunity to integrate innovative and technological advances of online learning with interaction and participation of the best traditional practices.

References:

1. Andreeva A. Knowledge or competence // Andreeva A. Higher education in Russia. 2005. No. 2. S. 3-11.
2. Bernard, R.M., Abrami. P.C., Lou. Y., & Borokhovski, E. (2004). A methodological morass? How we can improve quantitative research in distance education. *Distance Education*, 25 (2), 175-198.
2. Beyth-Marom, R., Harpaz-Gorodeisky, G., Bar-Haim, A., & Godder, E. (2006). Identification, job satisfaction and work motivation among tutors and the Open University of Israel. *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning*, 7 (2), 1-13.
3. Blinov VI, Artamonova MV What is expected in Russia from professional education // Blinov. V.I., Artamonova M.V. *Education issues*. 2012. No. 1. - P. 291.
4. Bornschlegl, M. & Cashman, D. (2018). Improving Distance Student Retention Through Satisfaction and Authentic Experiences. *International Journal of Online Pedagogy and Course Design*, 8(3), S. 60-77.
5. Clemons, S. (2005) Encouraging Creativity in Online Courses. Retrieved from: http://www.itdl.org/journal/jan_05/article05.htm. Distance learning definition. (2018).
6. Dearnley, C., & Matthew, B. (2000). A group of nurses experience open learning: Exploring the impact. *Open Learning*, 15 (2), 191-206.
7. Garrison. D.R., Anderson, T., & Archer, W. (2001). Critical thinking, cognitive presence, and computer conferencing in distance education. *American Journal of Distance Education*, 15 (1), 7-23.
8. Kanavo V.A. Retrieved from: <http://www.curator.ru/e-learning/publications/doplus.html>
9. Merriam - Webster Dictionary. Retrieved from: <https://www.merriamwebster.com/dictionary/distance%20learning>. Dehtjare, J. (2019).
10. Polat E.S. Models of distance learning // Polat E.S. *Distance learning pedagogical technologies*. - M.: Academy, 2006.
12. Schunk, D.H. (2000). *Learning Theories* (3rd Ed.). Englewood Cliff, NJ: Prentice - Hall.