The Use of the Internet in TEFL and Designing Business English Courses

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Abstract: This research sought to examine how teaching English as a foreign language and designing a business English syllabus using the internet improves the education of students. Several English language educators have adapted to teaching their students using the internet, which has produced successful online classroom experiences. Specific objectives of the research include explaining how the virtual classroom experiences are beneficial to both the instructor and the student and how the physical location of the students does not impede the activity of the lessons being taught. The third objective was to examine how designing business English syllabi using the internet can influence the performance of a student. Lastly, the research sought to recognize the advantages of instructing students with the use of business negotiation skills. The research was conducted by examining internet based TEFL and Business English lesson plans to complete these objectives. Various journal articles and an internet based examination platform were analyzed in order to conduct this research. The main findings are that using the internet to educate pupils in TEFL and designing business English syllabi greatly improves both classroom performance and student education. It was also established that the internet is a great tool for educators to use due to the vast amount of web based applications and classroom accessories by the simple click of a button. The recommendation is that educators of TEFL and business English should consider the use of or at least try using the internet in order to teach their students because the results will speak for themselves. Additionally, the educators and students alike will be able to engage in an internationally diverse environment due to the internet based classroom experience.

Background: Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) is a popular academic course taught to non-native English speaking students throughout the world. Business English is a common curriculum that is taught to college level students and business professionals. The use of the internet has become a useful tool in academics in recent years due to the vast amount of applications and research materials that are available to teachers.

Materials and Methods: In order to complete this analysis, the internet was used by visiting educational websites, TEFL platforms, TEFL and business English course books and observing online classroom lessons. The methods used to collect the information were followed as suggested by Educational Testing Service (ETS) and internet Based Testing (iBT). The research was completed between February 13, 2020 to April 22, 2022 while the author was physically located in Huizhou, Guangdong, China.

Results: The findings of this research have established that using the internet to teach students and create syllabi are extremely useful. Teachers of TEFL and business English should implement the internet into their curriculum in order to teach their students. The use of the internet is a powerful tool for educators due to the multitude of teaching applications, which can lead to a successful learning experience.

Conclusion: The analysis established that a teacher and student transition from a normal classroom setting to a virtual classroom environment is quite easy to adapt to. The examination established that teachers of TEFL and Business English should have more confidence in the use of the internet as an education tool. The views identified from the explanation of teaching styles will allow me to acquire, determine, and learn from other educators who use different instructional techniques with the use of the internet.

Keywords: TEFL, Students, Teachers, Internet, Business English, Syllabus

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I. Introduction:

Use of the Internet in Teaching English as a Foreign Language

Before the internet, teachers were predominantly thought of as the main catalyst for passing information onto students. However, following the advent of the internet, learning has come to a new stage where students can foster knowledge independently and teachers do not have to rely on traditional classroom settings to engage with their students. The internet has transformed the essence of how people communicate and disseminate information. According to Brown et al. (2018), the internet harbored a revolution of how we gather knowledge, allowing for a more structured and accessible collection of the entirety of human intelligence.

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Therefore, it is expected that the internet today plays a central role in how we learn and how courses are structured and delivered.

Teaching English as a Foreign Language:

In Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL), the internet plays a considerable role in helping educators and students achieve their objectives. Today, TEFL instructors use the internet to schedule virtual classrooms where students can attend with flexibility. These virtual classrooms can be recorded so that students can access a classroom environment whenever they want to revisit learning materials or attend at a later time due to a conflicting schedule. Moreover, these virtual classrooms have no geographical limits. A student can attend an English class hosted on another continent without having to cross country borders. These are just some of the advantages the internet has brought to the TEFL realm.

Various Ways for Teaching TEFL:

Beyond virtual classrooms, there are various ways that the internet transforms learning and instructional development in TEFL settings. First, students can now access real-life examples of English usage through an application. They can conveniently access English conversations conducted between native speakers with a lot more ease than in traditional classroom settings. Websites such as Vimeo and YouTube are useful resources for English learners to not only experience the language, but also gain insight into how the language is used and applied in different settings (Khalaf, 2018). Therefore, TEFL students today have an easier time connecting and understanding the language compared to prior learners who benefited from interactions with their teachers and textbook resources only.

The second way the internet is being used to improve instructions in TEFL classes is helping students develop a daily routine while using English. Today, teachers can easily formulate worksheets for a class, create assignments, and manage other class activities based on internet resources students frequently engage with. For instance, teachers can assign students to listen to English conversations on YouTube and analyze these conversations using concepts learned during the course. Moreover, most of the content on video sharing sites such as YouTube and other social media platforms is predominantly in English. Consequently, English becomes part of a student's day-to-day experience, helping them develop the effective communication skills required for success of their educational pursuits.

The Advantages of Website Material for TEFL Instructors:

TEFL instructors also benefit from an ever materializing group of websites focused on helping people develop vocabulary and grammar. These sites, most of which are free to access, allow users to engage in different exercises to improve their English pronunciation, grammar, and vocabulary. The educational testing service (ETS) website, for instance, is notable for offering materials and practice tests that people can use to prepare for exams (ETS, 2020). Teachers, as a result, do not have to engage in extensive preparation for their classes or plan on covering every aspect of the course thanks to internet resources such as the ETS website that reduce much of their traditional workload.

Closure on the Use of the Internet and TEFL:

Before attempting to analyze a syllabus, it is imperative to gain a notion of what a syllabus ought to contain. According to contemporary definitions adopted by scholars, a syllabus specifies content of an academic course that is taught and tested (Bhuvaneswari and Nandhini, 2017). Following the above definition, several critical elements of a syllabus can be ascertained. First, a syllabus must detail the contents of a course while listing what must be taught. Secondly, a syllabus must indicate that learners of the course will be subjected to testing as part of their learning. These two elements will guide the evaluation of the Business English course in the Ukraine which is specified to this assignment. More than that, however, a successful evaluation of a syllabus must be aligned to the learner's preferences while optimizing their most desirable outcomes. These two guidelines will also inform the following syllabus evaluation in the next section.

$\label{lem:eq:constraint} \textbf{Evaluation of a Business English Course for an Economic Relations Department:}$

Course Description

A syllabus must adequately describe the material of the academic course, apart from listing the course content and topics. The Ukraine syllabus achieves this requirement in the necessary information section of its syllabus. According to this section, the course is taught to students within five years spanning across nine semesters. This section indicates that students will be categorized according to their mastery of the English language within the first year. From these details, the course duration and prerequisites are clear to the candidates. Moreover, the syllabus creator indicates that the course emphasizes writing and communication skills. Therefore, it is clear that the primary objective of the syllabus is to improve the English communication

abilities of students. That would then indicate that the syllabus presented here is a notional-functional syllabus as it incorporates communicative activities that will assist students in cultivating English as a second language.

Overall Tone

Another aspect that needs consideration when analyzing a syllabus is the tone of the syllabus. There are various tones observed in different outlines, such as dictatorial, teacher-oriented, and learning-oriented. Since outlines are meant to communicate information about the course, learning objectives, grading policies, and other related activities, they can be considered a contract between the student and the faculty. For that reason, it is often desirable to provide a rationale of the course objectives and assignments, indicate potential pitfalls, include potential candidates in the decision-making process, and even allow students to set expectations for their teachers. Such a syllabus is student/learning-oriented. However, the syllabus presented in this case does not include these elements. Instead, it dictates to the learners what they are expected to do and sets out the role of their instructor in a rigid fashion. For instance, the syllabus states that the teacher follows a set of teaching techniques that start with a discussion of points and concludes with students submitting assignments. This demonstrates a syllabus that adopts a teacher-oriented tone since the language focuses on the teacher rather than the student.

Course Outcomes

The course outcomes are clearly articulated in the syllabus. It states that students, in the end, will be able to communicate in English for business purposes, carry out research, and fluently engage in business negotiations. These outcomes are desirable for an English Business Course as Cotton and Robbins (1993) note that business classes must instill in learners the ability to successfully participate in commercial transactions and settings. Moreover, to advance in international business, it is imperative to have sufficient command of the English language, seeing that English is largely adopted across the world (Oxford Dictionary for International Business, 1998).

Course Format

A practical and effective syllabus must be prepared in a clear and understandable format for the students to comprehend the activities of the course. Failure to provide a transparent and easily digestible outline of course activities makes a syllabus cryptic and vague. Moreover, while outlining the course format, a syllabus must indicate the role and expectations of both learners and teachers.

In the syllabus being evaluated, there is a clear description of the course format and the role and expectations of each stakeholder. The syllabus starts by indicating that students will be grouped according to their mastery of the English language. Based on the details above, it is apparent that the level of English comprehension determines the format of the class. Therefore, students in the same class can expect that their classmates have roughly the same English ability. Such grouping can be vital to the students' learning as it prevents situations where a student might feel discouraged if discovering that the rest of the class had a much wider gap in understanding. Moreover, grouping students with the same capabilities ensures that the teacher can formulate a teaching plan that will benefit all the students. Regarding the determination of the roles and expectations of teachers and students, the syllabus makes the duties of the teacher and students readily understood. Students are expected to complete their assignments, engage in group activities, and demonstrate the ability to apply learned concepts in real-world situations. After the students complete the course, they will have acquired the skills necessary to facilitate successful international relations that make up the contemporary business landscape (Groom and Light, 1994). On the other hand, the teacher is expected to take charge of the learning process by following a predictable teaching pattern.

Instructor Beliefs and Assumptions

Instructor beliefs and assumptions are vital components that affect the outcome of an activity. For that reason, a syllabus must set out the expectations and assumptions the instructor creates to give candidates the idea behind the requirements and structure of the course. The syllabus under evaluation accomplishes this element by detailing the teaching method to be used. However, the syllabus creator fails to justify or provide adequate reasoning behind adopting the teaching method. Consequently, while learners understand the assumptions of the teacher, they are not afforded the benefit of understanding why the teacher makes these assumptions. In itself, failing to provide a rationale for the beliefs and assumptions of the instructor is not a fatal flaw. However, it is reflective that the instructor assigns a lot of weight to the experiences that guide his or her teaching practice.

Class Schedule

Another vital evaluation point for a syllabus is the class schedule, as it gives entrants an idea of their obligations to complete the course. The syllabus meets this requirement by detailing the activities to be completed each week. At the same time, it gives a direction on what the teacher intends to cover throughout the course while outlining the learning outcomes of every week. However, the syllabus does not articulate the chronological list of topics of each class or the readings that will aid students in preparing for deadlines and completing their assignments.

Needs Analysis:

Scenario A: Needs Analysis

In the first scenario, information about the learners is necessary to structure the course. Primed with information about the student body, it becomes possible to gauge their ability to absorb a new language, which primarily allows the identification of the specific needs for learners. It is commonly accepted that a syllabus that appears suitable for everything might not necessarily meet the needs of every individual learner (Remache and Ibrahim, 2018). Pedagogy researchers acknowledge that a language-teaching institution must not formulate a syllabus in an ad hoc manner influenced by the vague preferences, favored teaching techniques, and methodologies that worked before. What is advocated in a language course is considering who is being trained, how to implement the instructions, and what is to be taught.

In this scenario, it is paramount to identify the educational background of the four individual learners before formulating a syllabus. The educational background of the learners proves informative in syllabus design as it allows the instructor to understand the level of language each student is able to grasp, along with their grammar, adjectives, and other language constructs. Moreover, the educational background should reveal the instructor's preferred learning style to apply in instructions. Lastly, it is essential to establish the learning purpose as it allows the instructor to define activities and tasks associated with the course (Widodo, 2017).

Scenario B: Needs Analysis

In the second scenario, it is evident that the candidates already have some level of English competency. Therefore, the key requisites for the learners are to improve on their mastery of the language to the degree that they can communicate effectively and fluently with an international audience well versed in the language. In such circumstances, it is paramount to group the students according to their language levels. That will allow the instructor to develop a syllabus that addresses the needs of each student individually. Secondly, since the classes are scheduled for short durations, the instructions must be prepared to maximize students' exposure to the language within the shortest time possible. Hence, writing and teaching exercises should form a large part of the teaching activities as they help in the rapid acquisition of language (Ahmed, 2018). In addition, learning activities should include telephone etiquette, written communication formulation, and practical examples through mock conversations to match the specific requirements from each of the learners. It is also imperative to appreciate the employee's status in the company. Most of them are mid-tier employees and, consequently, have certain expectations arising from their position. They expect an experience that matches their status and, as such, instructions should be formulated to match their expectations and circumstances. However, the instructor should not take anything for granted or afford too much leeway for the students, as this can adversely affect learning outcomes.

Design a Communication Skills Lesson Plan Based on Material on the Internet:

Email Etiquette in a Business Setting

Students will learn the definition of the word "etiquette" and how it applies to online conversations and in particular, communicating through email in a business setting. Students will learn the difference between inperson etiquette and email etiquette during the course. The lesson will help students convey tone, mood, and message appropriately when sending email and text communications in business settings. Word choice is a primary concentration of the lesson as the use of correct wording and phrases is vital for ensuring effective and efficient communication. Moreover, students will learn the use of correct punctuations when crafting written communications. Therefore, the course uses effectual but concise written exercises to help students develop these skills.

Lesson Objectives

The objectives of the lesson are:

- Develop an understanding of etiquette in international business communications.
- Distinguish between in-person, phone, and text etiquette in business settings.
- Communicate fluently and effectively through email.
- Observe correct word choices and punctuations in written communication.

At the end of the course, write an email to a company executive requesting funds for a project using all
the skills developed.

Lesson Outcomes

At the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Use email clients for professional communication.
- Convey proper tone and mood in business emails.
- Develop an understanding of the nature of business interactions.
- Appreciate the need for etiquette in establishing and maintaining business relationships.

Lesson Activities

During the lesson, the instructor will introduce the role of etiquette in business communications and personal communications. Students are expected to take notes of the dictation and, later on, identify the key elements applicable to email and text communications in a business environment. Through this exercise, students learn the difference between personal and professional interactions and how etiquette differs by situation.

In the second activity, the instructor will ask students to write down etiquette rules that guide their personal and professional relationships within their own cultures. This exercise is meant to demonstrate the fact that etiquette in communication is not restricted to the English language. Moreover, the exercise should demonstrate to the students that everyone in formal and informal communications observes universal rules of etiquette. In addition, the students will learn that there are differences between personal and business communication courtesies.

The third activity involves the teacher helping students identify which words suitable for personal or business communications. This exercise aims at giving students an introduction to business communication vocabulary. Students will develop with this list of words by interacting with various samples of business-related emails. They will learn how to address the recipient of an email adequately and appropriately, and sign off properly. These skills are crucial when communicating with clients and fellow professionals.

The last activity involves students crafting business and professional emails. Students will rely on previous assignments to identify the correct tone and word choice by email type. While grading the students' performance, the instructor will point out instances where students mistakenly adopt a personal tone or mood in their business emails and vice versa. Revealing these instances should help further cement the distinction between personal and business communications. It will also assist in helping students choose the correct words necessary for business communications.

Lesson Materials

The lesson is an intensive hands-on experience putting students on the first-track to crafting business emails. Students will require access to a laptop with an internet connection. Through their keyboard, students will be able to interact with businesses and websites, which is crucial to helping them develop the necessary acumen for business communications. The second resource that will be supplied to students is a worksheet with personal communication and business communication vocabulary. This list will help students in their endeavor to identify the right words for business communications. Furthermore, the list should help students identify business communications' desired mood and tone. The worksheet includes definitions for each word and their common usage. Through the worksheets, students will gain a fast introduction to business communications. *Differentiation*

The lesson uses real-life business communication emails, thereby giving students examples of how to craft emails in a professional setting and an overview of the best approach to use in different circumstances.

Business English Materials Critique:

The sample intends to provide students with an example of how business conversations should be properly conducted in English. In the sample, a job applicant seeks out a position as a clerical assistant, and in her pursuit, she speaks to a legal assistant in the attempt of gaining information on her chances of being employed.

Based on the provided information, the prospective job seeker is clearly not confident in her chances of being hired at the law firm. The details included suggests that she does not possess a lot of experience working with lawyers, even though she was previously employed at a law firm for six weeks. Therefore, the sample attempts to cover one of the key concerns students face when involved in a business language course, which is confidence. Students may not be well-versed in the second language they are learning, making it difficult for them to carry out basic conversations. In turn, these business clients taking the course may feel inadequate and insecure at the beginning of the course. Having an example that points to these inadequacies and insecurities is

an excellent way of helping candidates overcome insecurities and build more confidence. In this example, the students realize that even with a mastery of English, people feel insecure when faced with new situations. The teacher, in this case, helps the learners realize that even if they are feeling detached in the pursuit of mastering a new language, a certain level of comprehension will help them overcome these insecurities as the job seeker did when she not only received helpful information for her needs, but also improved her chances of being hired as a clerical assistant. Consequently, the sample is a good illustration of how instructors can help build confidence in their Business English classes.

While the example excels at instilling confidence in students, it does not fit the needs of select students with a broad range of abilities. In the sample, students learn telephone skills that are only applicable to job applicants. It might be possible that students attending the class already have jobs, making the sample irrelevant for their current situation. When students view course materials as irrelevant to their needs, they may not associate with the course materials, and consequently, fail to maximize their potential. As a consequence, even when students are faced with course materials and instructions that are structured and organized, if those course materials do not speak to their immediate needs, they will lack the psychological motivations to engage with them. The result is a course that lacks effectiveness in helping learners to achieve their goal to progress. To remedy the situation, the instructor should take time to learn more information about the students and from that information, structure examples that are relevant. For instance, if the students come from a marketing background, the instructor should transform the example into one where an employee seeks to acquire a marketing contract from a client. Using examples specific to the experiences of students not only motivates them to engage with the course, but also creates a situation where the course focuses on the immediate needs of students.

In connection to the example above, the account provided might not resonate with students of different employment. Managers taking the course, for example, might not associate with the example as they do not expect to engage in telephone calls seeking help. Rather, this group of students deem themselves as authorities in their companies which gives them a capacity to give orders. It is inherently problematic to develop an example that fits the employment status of every student who attends the course, but there is a solution which ensures that most students taking up the course can relate to the example. The telephone conversation, instead of being focused on securing employment, can be structured between two employees collaborating on a task. That way, students with different employment backgrounds can relate to the example as employees, regardless of their status in a firm, and collaborate on a daily basis.

Teaching Negotiation Skills:

Aims of the Lesson Regarding the Closing Phase

The lesson aims to connect the previous four phases of negotiation, preparation, opening, and bargaining by incorporating it into the objective of any negotiation undertaking while closing and arriving at a settlement. Students will appreciate why it is essential to prepare for a negotiation by producing an effective opening statement, establish goals early on, verify what they are willing to concede, and engage in effective bargaining to achieve a deal.

While students have learned how to argue persuasively and engage in effective bargaining tactics in previous lessons, this lesson concentrates on helping students capitalize on the progress they achieved in prior negotiation phases. The course also imparts on the necessity of closing the deal as it is the most critical stage in a negotiation. Many concessions have gone awry following insufficient effort in the closing stage.

To help students effectively close negotiation, the course teaches them how to identify when an opportunity for closing emerges. Therefore, the students will learn how to determine when the position of negotiating parties narrows significantly by pointing to the arrival of the closing stage. Students will also learn to recognize when counter-arguments have faded out significantly, hinting to parties being open to closing. Lastly, students will learn how to take advantage of either party asking for a final agreement as an opportunity to close the negotiations.

Apart from closing strategies, students will also learn how to handle any complexities that might arise during the final stage, such as an abrupt change of terms that might void the closing of negotiation and how to handle these challenges. Moreover, candidates will be taught how to counter last-minute tactics normally introduced during the final stage to further the interests of one party. Tactics such as threatening to pull out of a negotiation when closing seems imminent are often applied to force a party to conform to the demands of another party. After this lesson, students will be in a position to counter such maneuvers by identifying them and using corrective measures. Effective last-minute tactics will also be taught to them regarding the closing stage to obtain a better deal in negotiations.

Lesson Objectives

The intention of the lesson is to improve the students' capability of closing negotiations. The ability to close negotiations is paramount to business relations that call for parties reaching a consensus. Moreover, successful business maneuvering requires a person to have the ability to persuade other parties to support their objectives. Therefore, being able to close negotiations goes a long way in making a successful business person. The second objective of the course is to demonstrate to students that negotiations are part of everyday life and they should not shy from it. Students, through activities in class, will learn how to negotiate when ordering a cup of coffee at a restaurant or securing a lucrative contract for their company. Therefore, the lesson intends to help students become confident in their ability to close a deal just as they are optimistic about ordering a cup of mocha at their favorite coffee shop. Lastly, the lesson aims to instill confidence in students by firmly reinstating their objectives during a negotiation. The ability to hold a strong position during the closing stages of negotiation is vital when avoiding the challenges occasioned by last-minute settlement tactics seeking to detract the preparation completed in the previous steps.

Assumed Prior Knowledge

The lesson assumes that students have an adequate understanding of English and can convey their intentions effectively during a negotiation. Students require a strong understanding of the language, including grammar, since slight grammatical changes can alter the plans of negotiation positions significantly, especially when using multiple tenses to distinguish time. Moreover, the course assumes that students have prior experience in interactions that required bargaining either during their social life or in a corporate setting. *Resources*

For the lesson, students will be furnished with:

- Worksheets
- PowerPoint presentations
- Course textbook
- Assignment handouts
- Whiteboard

Lesson Assignments

Students will be required to close a negotiation from a fictional scenario provided by the teacher. In the exercise, students are required to write a well-thought-out closing argument in a negotiation where the other party introduces last-minute demands. The student, in writing, as well as in a class presentation, is expected to demonstrate why it is in the interest of the other party not to alter the terms of the negotiation. On top of presenting a persuasive argument related to the scenario, students are also expected to re-establish the initial goals of the negotiation and convince the other parties why these goals are in their best interests. Correct or incorrect answers will not apply for this assignment. The only criterion that requires to be met is the demonstration of the ability to effectively communicate in English and render a persuasive argument.

For the second assessment, students are required to research a recent news article documenting negotiations. The article must have been published in the last year and clearly show the different stages of negotiation. Students are not limited to corporate news only. They can choose any topic of interest, including current affairs and world news.

Assessment

When the course is completed, students will be required to demonstrate an appreciation of the importance in closing a negotiation. Students must also demonstrate the ability to plan out negotiations with a particular focus on the final stages as well as their concessions. Additionally, students should be able to apply the theoretical knowledge gained in class to real-world examples that occurred at their places of work or in other scenarios.

Differentiation

The use of a hands-on approach gives students a first-hand account of how negotiations should be carried out and enforced. After the lesson, students will have actionable skills in closing negotiations, even when faced with considerable challenges during the closing phase.

II. Recommendations:

The findings of this research have established that the uses of the internet in order to educate students and develop syllabi are extremely useful. It is therefore recommended that teachers of TEFL and business English should consider implementing the internet into their curriculum in order to teach their students. The use

of the internet is a powerful tool for teachers due to the multitude of teaching applications, which can lead to a successful learning experience. Additionally, the teachers and students will both be able to experience a culturally diverse web based classroom environment.

III. Conclusion:

In summary, the information obtained from this research will allow me to further evaluate the various methods necessary to educate students in the subjects of TEFL and business English with the use of the internet. This examination encouraged me to be confident in the use of internet based tools and virtual classrooms. The analysis established that a transition from a classic classroom environment to a virtual classroom setting is not difficult for an instructor or a student. The views perceived from the explanation of teaching styles will allow me to acquire, determine, and learn from other educators who use different instructional techniques. My intention is to become a prominent educator who possesses a different set of effective teaching skills that has a thorough impact on my students. Completing this research allowed me to procure useful knowledge regarding internet based education and develop business English curriculums. Informative, comprehensive and flexible teaching skills are the main techniques that I will implement into my future lesson plans when educating my students in the courses of TEFL, Business English, or any other academic subjects.

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