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BLENDED LEARNING: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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Abstract

The article deals with the organization of the process of training future teachers in the light of the requirements of the Federal State Educational Standard based on the use of modern information communication technologies. In particular, authors focus on the possibilities and prospects for organizing the process of vocational training at the Institute of Philological Education and Intercultural Communication at the BSPU named after M. Akmullah in the format of blended learning, as well as the problems that in this regard should be solved by the teaching staff. For regular internal and external peer review of BVEP, implemented with the use of distance technologies at different levels of training, MOOC expertise, create an Expert Council on e-education. This body will monitor the placement of materials for organizing the educational process in the blended learning mode on open education sites, as well as in order to promote the university's brand in Russia and abroad, expand the geography of applicants and increase the number of students in the system of additional education. For immersion students in polylingual quasi-professional activity, case discussion online site in Russian, native and foreign languages, foreign language resource centers for public access to authentic cultural materials to the electronic catalog of scientific publications in the original language and samples audio text, voiced by native speakers of the other languages to create methodical language laboratories.

Keywords: Blended learning, environment, LMS Moodle, vocational training.

1. Introduction

The transition to advanced digital technologies, intercultural and interdisciplinary integration, innovative model of preparation of graduates for professional activity in multicultural environment, mainstreaming of continuing education has created the conditions for the successful functioning of the electronic polylingual educational environment that meets the requirements of the strategic development of the University of a new type 3.0.

Multilingualism reflects the trends of modern education, incorporates a unique phenomenon of co-existing of many languages, which contributes to the assimilation by students other languages and foreign language cultural values. Multilingual education using e-learning provides for the simultaneous study of several languages (native, Russian as a state, Russian as a foreign, foreign languages), thus forming of free orientation ability in the modern information space.

Currently, the priority is given to competence and activity approaches in learning. That implies communication, authenticity of communication and language learning in a cultural context, autonomy and interactivity of foreign language education. It means the use of blended learning technology is in demand, as it can be adapted to the individual abilities of students (Ostapenko, 2017).

In recent years, the problem of using blended learning has been actively discussed in the scientific literature and pedagogical environment.

2. Problem Statement

On one hand the traditional model of subject training of students from the point of view of the formation of communicative competences showed its insufficiency. At the present stage of international contact development and intercultural communication, the study of any FL using only textbooks, grammar reference books and dictionaries has become ineffective, unprofessional and uninteresting.

On the other hand, along with the advent of modern multimedia technologies and Internet services, there emerges the practice of implementing a learning model with the presentation of the entire educational material of philological disciplines on an electronic platform. This can happen without contacting with a teacher, which eliminates the possibility of a 21st century teacher full training. In accordance with the requirements of the Federal State Educational Standards, a modern teacher should possess universal communicative competences in Russian and foreign languages, He/she must be a communicative leader, carry out professional communication in Russian, creating and implementing various projects on an intermediary basis and also ought to be an intercultural mediator, being able to take part in international scientific conferences, linguistic forums and festivals, internships (Kudinov et al., 2018).

Taking into account current trends, an urgent task is to introduce a blended learning model. That requires revising the content of academic disciplines, reformatting lecture courses into an online mode, introducing information technology training to form students' communicative competencies. The assessing level tools of development of universal competencies in Russian and foreign languages in accordance with a training profile in the transition to the Federal State Educational Standard 3 ++ should be changed as well.

3. Research Questions

Currently, in the theory and practice of blended learning there is a certain experience described in the scientific works of domestic and foreign scientists: M.Yu. Lebedeva, N. Lyubomirskaya, I.Yu. Mishota, A.N. Ostapenko, CJ. Bonk, C.R. Graham, A.G. Picciano et al.

The term "blended learning" appeared due to the research of foreign scientists. Curtis Bonk and Charles Graham refer blended learning to learning systems that are a synthesis of face-to-face and computer-based learning (Bonk & Graham, 2006).

Picciano (2009) notes that the currently accepted definition of the term blended learning does not exist, but it can be defined as a range of media integrated technologies along with traditional teaching methods in the mode face-to-face. The researchers from Russia also attempt to define this phenomenon of modern education. Thus Mishota (2012) under blended learning understands the "combined course", which "... combines e-learning software, real-time classroom teacher with the students" (p. 454).

As the analysis of various definitions of this term shows, blended learning is understood to mean both training systems or a training course, and a set of technologies and a separate technology. The ambiguity of the interpretation of the concept complicates its scientific understanding and implementation in teaching practice. From the above definitions it can be concluded that the concept of "blended learning" includes: 1) educational electronic courses created on the basis of online platforms, for example MOODLE; 2) part of the classroom is replaced by online activity; 3) part of the classroom is replaced by online activity. Blended learning is impossible without creating an information and communication educational environment on the basis of the university's educational portal, saturated with constantly updated and improving interactive content (Babushkina, Kadomtseva, & Kiryakova, 2015; Kudinov et al., 2018).

In our work, we adhere to the point of view of Clayton Christensen Institute of Disruptive Innovations researchers (Clayton Christensen Institute), who give the following definition: "Blended learning is an educational technology, in which learning takes place a) partly in an online environment, with the possibility of independent control of the way, time, places and pace of learning by the student; b) partly in the classroom, with the participation of the teacher ("face to face"), and thus all the components of such training are interrelated and create a holistic learning process" (Horn & Staker, 2014). In this definition the most important, in our opinion, is 1) that all components of blended learning must be interdependent and to create a holistic training course, and 2) the student chooses the time and tempo of training and is responsible for the results of their studies. Thus, the idea of blended learning is not so much in that part of the training takes place online, but rather that the student receive the opportunity and responsibility to decide when, how, with what speed and where to study.

It should be noted that currently in the theory and practice of blended learning has specific experience that is described in scientific works of domestic and foreign scientists. Was even created sites designed to compile data on the implementation of blended learning around the world. For example, Blended learning Universe.

Despite the fact that numerous studies confirm the effectiveness of the technology of blended learning, it is not widely used in the educational environment of Russian Federation. Although there are descriptions of individual methodological developments (Agafonova, Abrosimova, & Vatskovskaya, 2019;

Lebedeva, 2016; Makhkamova & Tukhtakhodzhaeva, 2016; Ostapenko, 2017; Shaykina, 2017; Yaremenko, 2016).

For pedagogical science and practice, scientific understanding of the advantages and disadvantages of this technology is very important, as well as identifying difficulties in implementing blended learning and determining the ways to overcome these difficulties.

4. Purpose of the Study

The aim of this work is a) to summarize the experience of the teaching staff of the Institute of philological education and intercultural communication of Bashkir state pedagogical University named after M. Akmulla (M. Akmulla BSPU) on the development of methodology of creation of information-educational environment of a University (e-learning); b) to emphasize advantages and possible limitations of blended learning of native and foreign languages in the pedagogical University; c) to analyze the difficulties of implementation of this technology and d) to identify the ways to overcome these difficulties.

5. Research Methods

In the course of research at various stages, various methods and techniques of research were used: theoretical: analysis, synthesis, systematization, classification, analysis of theoretical and methodological literature on the research problem; empirical: observation, experimental learning, quantitative and qualitative processing of the results of experimental verification (Ostapenko, 2017, p. 270). And namely:

- study and analysis of literature of domestic and foreign researchers in the field of linguistics, methods of teaching foreign languages;

- analysis of state educational standards, work programs and textbooks for teaching a foreign language in the mode of blended learning;

- observation of the process of learning a foreign language in the mode of blended learning at the Institute of Philological Education and Intercultural Communications;

- analysis of curricula for teaching a foreign language in the blended learning format;

- conduct an experiment to test the effectiveness of learning in the blended learning mode, including questioning and testing of trainees;

- statistical processing of experimental learning data.

6. Findings

As the analysis has shown, in practice there are many models of blended learning with varying degrees of "online-ness" and teacher participation, which can be defined as a share of external control by the learner's teacher (Andreeva, 2015). In the scientific literature there are several models of blended learning: rotational (Rotation Model), flexible (Flex Model), self-selection (A la carte Model) and virtual learning, enhanced by face-to-face classes (Enriched-virtual model). Most researchers distinguish two main models: rotational (with several subspecies) and flexible (Horn & Staker, 2014).

With the rotational model (Rotation Model), the main part of the training takes place in the classroom, but at the same time, the activity of the students is transferred to the online environment at a

certain time. A feature of this model is, according to the researchers, the strict distribution of time between individual e-learning, carried out in the mode of distance support from the teacher, and training in the classroom together with the teacher.

The following types of rotational models are implemented in the educational process in the disciplines of philological and pedagogical cycles at the Institute of Philological Education and Intercultural Communications of BSPU named after M. Akmulla.

Change of stations (Station Rotation). This type of model, which involves the change of working areas in one lesson, is carried out during laboratory classes at the Center for the Development of Competences named after L.M. Vasilyev "Slavoniic World", Educational and Cultural Center named after Kayum Nasyri Institute, study room of blended learning "Open Class", etc. It should be noted that the successful implementation of the "Change of stations" / "Change of working zones" model when teaching languages is possible in a normal audience. Teachers of practical courses in foreign languages often resort to this model at the stage of communicative skills development, most often in classes aimed at developing listening, speaking or reading and speaking skills. Usually a lesson begins with the announcement of the topic and the students' acquaintance with the route sheets, which show the order in which the working areas are changed and the tasks are completed. As a rule, students are divided into three subgroups and there are three zones in the route: a work zone with a teacher, an online zone and a group work zone.

Lab change (Lab Rotation) - a change of classrooms and forms of work during one school day. Different forms of work in this type of rotational model do not correspond to zones in one classroom, but to different classes or laboratories (Educational and Methodological Study named after G.M.Tukay, Educational and Cultural Center of the Institute named after Kayum Nasyri, French-language Resource Center of BSPU, French Reading Room of the National Library named after Z. Validi, etc.)

Flipped Classroom. This type of model assumes independent work of students at home in an online environment, when they get acquainted with the information proposed by the teacher, perform preparatory work at home, and in the classroom discuss with the teacher what has been learned. Then they perform practical and communicative tasks. This type of model has certain advantages in methodically competent implementation. In our practice, we are faced with some problems associated with didactic materials preparation. For example, when preparing a video lecture or a slide lecture, it was required that the lecturer speak for 90 minutes, i.e. so that the video lecture lasts as long as the traditional full-time occupation lasts. This requirement is not justified. In our opinion, it is more expedient to prepare several short but bright videos instead of one long video lecture. Experience has shown that this requirement does not seem appropriate. Currently, instead of one long video lecture, teachers are preparing a few short but vivid videos.

Individual route (Individual Rotation). As you know, an individual educational route is considered as a purposefully designed differentiated educational program that provides the learner with the position of a subject of choice. It assumes development and implementation of an educational program when teachers implement pedagogical support for their self-determination and self-realization. This model is realized in BGPU named after M. Akmulla through the so-called "Individual learner's schedule", which is provided, for example, to an undergraduate student, if he combines studies with work in a future specialty and cannot attend all classes. From the learner's point of view, it's good that he is provided with an individual route, taking into account his abilities, potential and professional needs. But for teachers, the didactic and

methodological support of the individual route of a particular student is additional work and is not in the main workload. The cons are in lack of regulated standardization of teacher's load.

As for the flexible model (Flex Model), it is mostly based on online training. In BSPU named after M. Akmulla the flexible model is resorted to when organizing the educational process for the basic educational vocational programs (BEVP) implemented by correspondence using distance learning technologies. As it is known, distance education technologies are understood as educational technologies realized mainly with the use of information and telecommunication networks with indirect (at a distance) interaction of students and teachers (Federal Law No. 273-ФЗ dated December 29, 2012 "On Education in the Russian Federation"). When implementing basic professional teaching programs using distant educational technologies, all remote/distant work is conducted on the basis of a virtual educational environment based on LMS Moodle 2.7. It allows opening access to information and educational and methodological support of programs using various information technologies for the implementation of uninterrupted Internet support of the educational process. Students study teaching materials in the collected sets of disciplines and perform tasks in a convenient time for them, and the division of the content of the electronic course into modules simplifies the search for the necessary materials. This training format is flexible, since the student chooses the duration and sequence of studying materials himself, fully building a personalized learning path.

The study of the experience of other researchers and the analysis of their own pedagogical activity allows us to highlight the indisputable advantages of the technology of blended learning and namely:

• flexibility (choice of time, place, pace);

• student centricity;

• focus on bringing up an active and responsible student;

• the possibility of individualization of training;

• compensation for the lack of full-time activities;

• improving the effectiveness of full-time classes;

• positive impact on learning outcomes;

• convenience in measuring and analyzing the results of students;

• broadening horizons;

• increase the motivation of students, etc.

In addition, the compliance of educational content developed by teachers with the most important principles of digital didactics (multimodality of educational content, interactivity of the learning environment and flexibility) contributes to a better perception of the material under study (Lebedeva, 2016, p. 63).

As for the lessons on the first or second foreign language practical course, blended learning also contributes to the more effective formation of many components of foreign language communicative competence: sociocultural, linguistic, sociolinguistic, discursive.

But, nevertheless, the experience shows that there are certain limitations in the application of this technology related to 1) the conditions of training; 2) the personality of the teacher and 3) the personality of the student.

The first group of factors includes insufficient conditions for the successful application of blended learning. Here are some of them:

• insufficient number of classrooms equipped with necessary modern equipment;

• insufficient Internet streaming speed for playing video materials / video lectures and performing interactive exercises;

• there are cases when the site is unavailable for technical reasons;

• due to the malfunctioning of electronic equipment, already loaded elements of the training course and students' answers may disappear;

• an insufficient number of classrooms, allowing you to create several working areas within the office, etc.

The second group of problems is related to the personality of the teacher and his professional competencies, namely:

• unavailability / unwillingness to revise familiar pedagogical strategies;

• insufficient information and communication competence;

• load of academic load and, as a result, lack of time for the development of new educational technologies;

• the complexity of creating high-quality electronic content;

• the need to check manually many replies to tasks in foreign languages (written tasks - annotations, essays, translations, - or listening to audio files with oral answers from students, etc.);

• unwillingness to publish authoring in open access, etc.

The third group of factors hindering the successful application of the technology of blended learning is related to the personality of the student. These include the following:

• not all students are sufficiently motivated to acquire knowledge and are willing to take responsibility for the results of their studies;

• not all students are disciplined and organized in order to complete tasks on time;

• not all students are conscientious and independently carry out tasks.

It should also be noted the specific difficulties students face when learning foreign languages. For example, difficulties in using Cyrillic keyboard layouts for foreigners learning Russian, or difficulties in using keyboard layouts with diacritical marks in French.

The literature analysis and our own pedagogical experience allow us to draw conclusions that the successful implementation of blended learning technology is possible only with the solution of all three groups of problems. The underestimation of any of the listed groups of factors will impede the achievement of planned results.

The results of research carried out by scientists at the Clayton Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovations identified the parameters of high-quality blended learning that ensure the quality of education:

• personalization;

• mastery-based learning — Bloom's theory, in accordance with which students must demonstrate perfect ability to use the material being studied before moving to a new material;

• an environment of high achievements (when each student has a high goal to which he aspires and is able to enter learning activity while achieving this goal);

• personal responsibility of students for their own learning outcomes (when students understand that it is their choice and their decision to study as they learn, and the results are their area of responsibility).

It is sufficient to note that the parameters listed above are the tools for the implementation of Russian educational standards. The thesis of the Clayton Christensen Institute for Disruptive Innovations researchers that students must demonstrate good knowledge of previously studied material before moving to a new material is also of some interest. However, in practice, in accordance with regulatory documents (Federal Law of 29.12.2012 No. 273-FZ "On Education in the Russian Federation"), which provides an opportunity for a student to eliminate academic debts for a whole year, the student is conditionally transferred to the next course and he begins to study new, not having mastered at the proper level the material passed, which makes it difficult to continue the training successfully (as cited in Savelieva, 2018).

7.   Conclusion

Analysis of the scientific literature allows us to conclude that blended learning means a training course or educational technology. It implies, that learning takes place a) partly in an online environment and the learner chooses the pace and strategy of learning, b) partly in the classroom in collaboration with the teacher and other students. In blended learning an important condition is the interconnectedness of all components of didactic content.

Blended learning has certain advantages, but its introduction into the Russian educational environment faces some difficulties due to certain factors. Analysis of our pedagogical experience shows that these difficulties can be divided into three groups:

1) difficulties associated with the conditions of study;

2) difficulties associated with the personality of the teacher;

3) difficulties associated with the personality of the student.

For the successful implementation of learning objectives, it is important to solve the problems associated with each group of difficulties.

In connection with the implementation of the blended learning model for the development of universal communicative competencies of students in their native, Russian and foreign languages, it is necessary to determine the content of the communication modules of the basic vocational education program (BVEP). They are as follows: technologies for the formation of communicative competences, tools for assessing the level of development of universal competencies in accordance with the training profile for professional activities in the multilingual, multicultural educational space of the region, of near and far abroad.

For regular internal and external peer review of BVEP, implemented with the use of distance technologies at different levels of training, MOOC expertise, create an Expert Council on e-education. This body will monitor the placement of materials for organizing the educational process in the blended learning mode on open education sites, as well as in order to promote the university's brand in Russia and abroad, expand the geography of applicants and increase the number of students in the system of additional education.

For immersion students in polilingual quasi-professional activity, case discussion online site in Russian, native and foreign languages, foreign language resource centers for public access to authentic

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