

## **THE USE OF WEB 2.0 TOOLS IN ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSE: A BLENDED LEARNING APPROACH IN ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The paper focuses on blended learning approach in teaching English for specific purposes. It provides opportunities of constructing learners 'knowledge and skills through practical experiences or modeled activities in real life. ESPs encompass English for Aviation, Business, Customs, Military and Law, Medicine, Tourism, Engineering and Technology. The advancement of technology in recent years has brought extensive use of ICT in education. The blended learning approach emphasizes the three basic features as 'Experiential Nature of Learning', 'Content Based Instruction'. The experiential learning and content based instruction are two intersecting ovals. Next the approach involves 'Internet Technologies' for organizing students' in-class and out-of-class online learning. ICT plays a significant role in blended learning as it employs a variety of effective and interactive tools as White Board, Chat system, and web 2.0 tools as Padlet, Voki, Voxopop, etc.

**Key Words:** *Blended Learning, Experiential Learning, Construction Based Instruction, ICT – Web 2.0 Tools.*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Today, Second Language / Foreign Language learning method are undergoing tremendous changes. Advancement in technology has made ICT an inevitable tool in education. Internet has become inextricably blended in

teaching and learning process. This encourages autonomous learning. The development of autonomous learning depends on what kind of English is being taught- General English, Business English, and English for academic purposes, English for specific purposes, and English for occupational purposes. As Rogers said, such providers of knowledge and skills are called 'Facilitators'. According to him, facilitators help students to organize their learning in the most productive and efficient way. The prediction of introducing such autonomous language has been pronounced as English as Second Language or Foreign Language (ESL/EFL). The reasons for this are twofold. First, as Graddol (2006: 72) points out, English in secondary and tertiary education has changed its position from being one of the academic subjects into the position of a basic skill to be acquired. According to Graddol (2006: 72), every class of almost every school where English is being taught and learned in which there is usually a great diversity of learners in what concerns their proficiencies, backgrounds, anticipations and ambitions, a much more personalized approach to teaching English is required. Consequently, greater and increasing learner autonomy is required.

### **ENGLISH FOR SPECIFIC PURPOSES**

According to Mackay and Mountford (1978: 2) "ESP is generally used to refer to teaching of English for a clearly utilitarian purpose." English should be taught to achieve specific language skills using real situations, by allowing them to use English in their future profession. Robinson (1991: 2) states that generally students study English "not because they are interested in the English language or English culture as such, but because they need English for study or work purposes". To outline the major features of ESP Dudley-Evans and St.Johns' tried (1998) to apply a series of characteristics, some absolute and some variable.

#### **Absolute Characteristics:**

1. ESP is defined to meet specific needs of the learners;

2. ESP is centered on the language (grammar, lexis, and register), skills, discourse and genre appropriate to these activities.

### **Variable Characteristics:**

1. ESP may be related to or designed for specific disciplines
2. ESP may use, in specific teaching situations, a different methodology from that of General English;
3. ESP is designed for adult learners, either at a tertiary level or in a professional work situation.
4. ESP is generally designed for intermediate or advanced students.
5. Most ESP courses assume some basic knowledge of the language systems, but it can be used with beginners.

A key distinction in ESP teaching/learning is between pedagogy and didactics. Didactics is knowledge-oriented, a science which aims to understand how teaching leads to learning” (Sarré & Whyte, 2016) whereas Pedagogy is practice-oriented which is concerned more with applied aspects of language teaching. The differences are shown in the table

Table-1. Didactics and pedagogy (from Sarré & Whyte, 2016)

Didactics	Pedagogy
Knowledge-oriented	Practice-oriented
A distancing and theorizing process	A practical process
Teaching leads to learning	Teaching practices and education

### **Blended learning**

According to encyclopedia, blended learning is the practical experience in e-learning. The blended learning occurs with the combination of traditional classroom and web based learning. The learning time is shared between classroom training and online training in blended learning. It has the advantage of flexibility than traditional classrooms. The flexibility is due to the fact that blended learning is a significant part of instruction which is delivered through online resources because learners can acquire more knowledge in online training. Blended learning technologies can broaden the spaces and

opportunities available for learning, support course management activities (e.g., communication, assessment submission, marking and feedback) and support the provision of information and resources to students in order to engage and motivate them through interaction and collaboration. It is quite rational that blended learning constructs learner's own learning of the target language.

Blended learning incorporates direct instruction, collaborative teaching, individualized computer assisted learning. It includes:

- i. Face to face teaching- In Blended learning students get ample time to interact with their teachers and thus get influenced by their personality and behavior. Face to face interaction helps in synchronous communication. Teachers and students are able to get immediate feedback that enables improvisation in teaching learning process.
- ii. Peer group interaction- inside the school campus students learn by formal means and they also learn informally when they interact with their peer groups.
- iii. Group discussion and exchange of ideas- classroom teaching not only provides students interaction with teachers but well-designed strategies to give students to undergo discussions with their class mates on different aspects of the course and exchange ideas. This helps to develop confidence in students, remove their hesitation and develop the skill of communicating effectively.
- iv. Virtual classroom- this provides student an option to learn anywhere, anytime and from anyone. Online learning through videos and audios- various recordings, animated videos are available that explain various concepts very easily.

Table- 2 Taxonomy of terms related to Blended Learning (Smith and Kurthen 2007 in Gruba and Hinkelman 2012: 4)

Term	Definition
Web- enhanced	Subjects that make use of a minimal amount of online materials such as posting a syllabus and

	course announcements
Blended	Subjects that utilize some significant online activities in otherwise face-to-face learning,
Hybrid	Subjects in which online activities replace face – face –class meetings
Fully Online	Subjects of learning materials are conducted through online

The role of teachers has radically changed from knowledge providers and skills to facilitators who help students to organize their learning in more productively and efficiently.

John Dewey (1938) developed the approach to teaching and learning what he called as ‘learning by doing’. This approach emphasizes three basic features as a) Experiential interactive learning for ESP, b) Content-Based Instruction and c) Using internet technologies in ESP for academic purposes. They are discussed as follows:

#### **a. Experiential interactive learning for ESP**

The experiential interactive learning is a form of learning implemented through a set of specific learning activities. It ensures the acquisition of learning English for academic purposes. The experiential interactive learning ESP for academic purposes include such methods as

- Role plays: Professional situations
- Project work: Professional-oriented learning projects
- Brain storming: Professional issues.

#### **b. Content-Based Instruction**

Content-based instruction is the integration of content from the subjects taught in the classroom. In learning ESPs for academic purposes, experiential learning is quite impossible without content – based instruction. These two are intersecting ovals. Content Based Instruction in EAP helps students to develop

their collaborative skills, challenging and demanding for the teachers and the students.

### **c. Using internet technologies in ESP for academic purposes**

The history of computerization in second language studies started in the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and got the name of CALL (Computer Assisted Language Learning). Egbert (2005:4) defined CALL as learning languages in whatever context with the aid of computer technologies. ICT plays a significant role in blended learning. It employs variety of effective and interactive tools such as online whiteboard, chat system, online conference and discussion forum. The ICT tools improve both teaching and learning process. Blended learning inculcates both teacher and student to acquire their learning as

- Recorded group discussions
- Using virtual learning environment
- Virtual learning environment moodle
- Improving presentation skills with powerpoint

## **BLENDED LEARNING: WEB 2.0 TOOLS IN LANGUAGE LEARNING**

The emerging technologies have provided an unparalleled opportunity for language teachers and learners. It creates student- centered classrooms where students get interest in learning English (Russell & Sorge, 1999). Among innovative technologies web 2.0 tools are more interactive and collaborative which are effective in English Language Teaching. The term Web 2.0 was first coined by Dance (1999) and later propagated by O'Reilly and Dougherty in 2004 at a conference, where ideas were discussed to upgrade the existing web. As Basal (2014) describes if web 2.0 tools are used into language learning, teachers can create more involving, collaborating and stimulated learning environment. Web 2.0 acts as a platform, elongating all devices, delivering software, consuming and remixing data from multiple sources, including individual users, while providing their own data and services in a form that allows remixing by others, creating network effects through an 'architecture of

participation' and going beyond the page metaphor of Web 1.0 to deliver rich user experiences (O'Reilly,2005).

## HISTORY OF WEB 2.0

Experts define Web 2.0 in terms of the tools that stand in online participation in content creation and social interaction. Web 2.0 developments organize the information on the Web by sorting a series of applications as blogging, wikis, networking sites etc. However, what has become clear is that these tools have many similarities and overlapping characteristics; mapping each of them out separately is fairly repetitive and perhaps not that analytically useful. The term Web 2.0 was founded by O'Reilly (2005) referring to a new generation of World Wide Web tools that enable users to create and share their own content. Web 2.0 is different from web 1.0 where web 1.0 was only information with users' contribution but web 2.0 gives users active roles in content sharing and creation. McLeod and Vasinda (2008) describe web 1.0 as one way communication which was a lecture method or a monologue whereas web 2.0 is a dialogue, classroom discussion and two way communications. According to Franklin and Harmelen (2000) Web 2.0 comprises many different meanings that integrate an increased importance and collaborative effort with the use of various kinds of social software, new ways of interacting with web-based applications,

Table-3. Comparison of Web 1.0 and 2.0 companies (O'Reilly, 2005)

Web 1.0	Web 2.0
Britannica Online	Wikipedia
Personal websites	Slogging
Content management systems	Wikis
Directories (taxonomy)	Tagging ("folksonomy")
Stickiness	Syndication

Web 2.0 is not only about the technology but also about its uses. It is more active and interactive than Web 1.0 since it opens opportunities for its

users. It is a transition from a “read only” to “Read Write” (Gilmor' z). Now, applications like blogs, Wikis and Podcasts, YouTube, Facebook and Twitter can create a more socially connected Web in which people can contribute as much as they can use (Andeison, 2007).

The reason behind using the tool in language learning includes learner-centeredness and comfortableness. Web 2.0 tools have the power to change teacher and learner roles considerably. With these tools, "...learner-centered education is a reality..." (Lce, & N1cloughlin,2007). Web 2.0 tools can facilitate knowledge construction by making the learning and teaching environment more collaborative and creative. As Murugesan (2007) points out that the use of web 2.0 generally

- Facilitates flexible web design, a creative reuse updates
- Provides a rich responsive user interface
- Facilitates collaborative content creation
- Establishes social networks of people with common interests
- Supports collaboration and helps to gather knowledge on collective intelligence (156)

## **LIST OF WEB 2.0 TOOLS FOR LANGUAGE TEACHING**

### **Padlet**

Padlet is internet-enabled device, including: PC, laptop, tablet, smartphone. There is no software require to download Padlet. Students can then share their works on Facebook, Google+, e-mail or even insert the URL into their blog (Wood, 2016). It is a virtual notice board, which is used in variety of ways to learn English.. Padlet is an application to create an online bulletin board which displays information for any topic. The teachers can add images, links, an videos. Unlike a normal notice-boards, padlet permits students to post stickies with multimedia elements. Teachers and students can also export "the digital wall" they created in a variety of formats including pdf, image, etc. and share it through social media sites.



In padlet, Students can record their ideas and opinions on a given topic in the lesson. Teachers can use Padlet as a communication platform like an LMS and can post all their announcements, lecture notes, videos etc. Students can create a storyboard including dialogues and images by working in groups. Teachers can create a wall based on a theme (environment, food, sports etc.) and students can create a wall including images, videos, sounds and texts on the given theme. Teachers can use Padlet as a communication platform like an LMS and can post all their announcements, lecture notes, videos etc. Students can create a storyboard including dialogues and images by working in groups. They can also collect ideas for exploration.



*Fig: 1 Virtual wall-padlet*

## **BLOG**

A blog (short for weblog) is an updated website that looks like an online journal. It requires only basic access to the Internet and one of the easiest ways to publish student writing on the www. Blogging becomes communicative and interactive when participants assume multiple roles in the writing process. Writers write and post, as readers/reviewers who respond to other writers' posts and take it as an interactive forum.

Historically, a weblog, or 'blog', is regularly updated, time and date stamped posts, running down the computer screen in chronologically reverse order (i.e. latest to the last). Crucially, there is an 'Add Comment' feature so that readers of posts can leave their opinions, questions or thoughts. Finally,

there is a writing style element: blogs are written by one individual who gives his or her thoughts in a generally relaxed, 'spoken' style (McIntosh (2005)

Types of blogs used in language teaching. Campbell (2003) has outlined three types of blogs for use with language classes:

- a. The Tutor Blog is run by the teacher of a class. The content of this type of blog can be limited to syllabus, course information, homework, assignments, etc. Or the teacher may choose to write about his or her life, sharing reflections about the local culture, target culture and language to stimulate online and in-class discussion. In this type of blog, students are normally restricted to being able to write comments to the teacher's posts.
- b. *The Class Blog* is a shared space, with teacher and students being able to write to the main area. It is best used as a collaborative discussion space, an extension of the classroom.
- c. The Learner Blog is the third type of blog and it requires more time and effort from the teacher to both set up and moderate, but is probably the most rewarding. It involves giving each student an individual blog. The benefit of this is that this becomes the student's own personal online space. Students can be encouraged to write frequently about what interests them, and can post comments on other students' blogs.

The uses of blog:

- provide extra reading practice for students.
- online student learner journals that can be read by their peers.
- guide students to online resources appropriate for their level'
- increase the sense of community in a class
- encourage shy students to participate.
- stimulate out-of-class discussion
- encourage a process-writing approach.
- online portfolio of student written work
- help build a closer relationship between students in large classes.

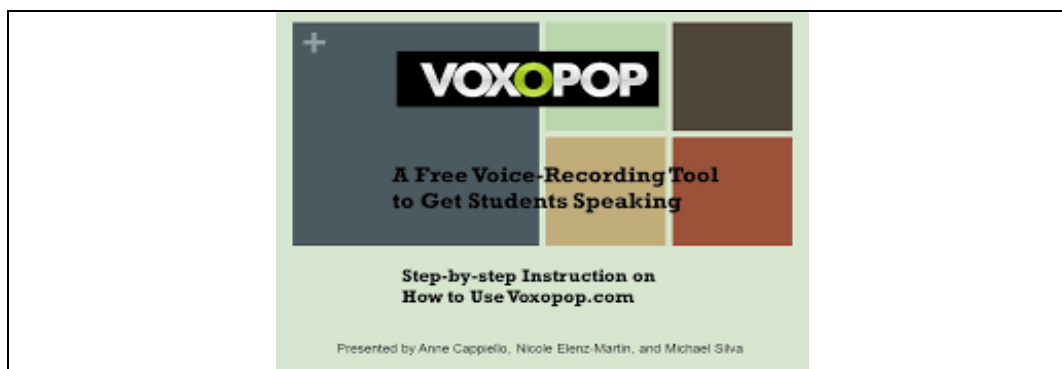
## VOKI

Voki is an online creative tool for expressing one's ideas personally in one's own voice and speaking character. It gives chance to students as well as teachers to use different avatars so as to make the communicative task more interesting. The main usage of Vokis is that in it students, after registering, can record one's audio-video, customize it according to one's likeness and share with others to get the feedback. Some of the key features would be:

- Managing students by giving common instructions
- Managing classroom lesson or material by providing link of message on VOKI
- Reviewing students' Voki tasks and giving feedback
- Sharing it in a team and getting peer feedback

## VOXOPOP

Voxopop is another great tool for developing one's speaking ability. This is the tool that has been used by many academicians as well as corporate professionals to maintain good communication skills of the employees. Voxopop is actually a voice-based e-learning tool that aims for engaging talks in talk groups with more fun and pleasure. Users would be able to record his/her voice and create a group and can use for development purpose. The best part is one can use it anytime, anywhere, from home or office, just with the use of internet.





*Fig: 2 Voxopop - voice-based e-learning tool*

## **Vialogues**

Vialogues, a combination of the words “video” and “dialogue,” is an interactive social media tool designed specifically for educators looking to use video in a more dynamic way in their classrooms. It provides an interactive video social media space and allows learners actively (and digitally) debate theoretical concepts or any relevant issues that emerge when watching video. Language teachers can use this tool to create lessons around video. Teachers can also add quizzes and comment on the video lesson. They can create video discussion on any specific topic and can record and upload their lessons.

## **Stixy (<http://stixy.com>)**

Stixy is a virtual bulletin board space. Notes, photos, documents, and to-do items can be added to the Stixy bulletin board by users. After content has been added to a board, it can be shared with others of your choosing. Those that have been invited to the Stixy board can be given permission to add content, upload, or edit. Stixy can be used as a communication tool with your students. Create a classroom board where you post homework assignments, resources, to-do-items, etc. for your students. Students can, in turn, submit assignments through the document upload, add notes asking questions of the class, and participate in online discussions. Students can post ideas and research findings. Stixy can also be used as a virtual wallet for students. After creating the board throughout the year, students can include their content and

learning. Students can view their learning and progress in one place and parents, teachers, and other students can leave feedback and encouragement on the board. Stixy does require that users register with an email address.

### **ADVANTAGES OF WEB 2.0:**

- Flexibility of time and place.
- Variety of media.
- Ease of usage.
- Learners can actively be involved in knowledge building.
- Can create dynamic learning communities.
- Everybody is the author and the editor, every edit that has been made can be tracked.
- User-friendly.
- Updates in the wiki are immediate and it offers more sources for researchers.
- It provides real-time discussion.

### **CONCLUSION**

The paper draws conclusion that the blended learning approach to ESPs in teaching/learning make students more involved than a stereo typed class. Blended learning tools support more flexible, interactive, efficient way to learn the language. Web 2.0 tools collaborate, communicate and share knowledge to learn the language and develop language skills effectively and easily. It is therefore rational to state that the variety in the use of these tools for educational purposes mostly depends on the creativity of the language teachers to integrate them into their learning and teaching context in English for academic purposes.

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