# “Incorporating Technology to an EGAP Course for Medical Students: the case of Open Lingua program at Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia”

**Jorge Hugo Muñoz**
**Wilbert Restrepo**

**HETS** Best Practices Showcase – January 2014


Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia

www.ucc.edu.co

# Agenda

- Context
- Defining Blended Learning
- Defining EGAP
- Course implementation
- Course design
- Positive Aspects
- Negative Aspects
- Conclusions
- References

# Reflection

"traditional educational environments do not seem to be suitable for preparing learners to function or be productive in the workplace in today's society. Institutions that do not incorporate the use of new technologies in schools cannot seriously claim to prepare students for life in the twenty-first century". Yelland (2001)

# Reflection

"success on the integration of new technology into education varies from curriculum to curriculum, place to place and class to class depending on the ways it is applied, Becta (2002)

# Context

- Open Lingua
- Institutional program for foreign language learning
- It started in 2011 as a blended program
- Multilingual platform for blended learning
- Principles of Communicative Language Teaching based on Tasks

  (Interaction in real world situations – Authentic materials – learner centered – Effective feedback)

  Wesche and Skehan (2002)

# Context

- 18 branches in the country
- Near 13.000 students
- 110 Language teachers
- 4 levels of instruction (curriculum)
- 3 hours face to face – 3 hours virtual work
- 96 hours of instruction per level
- Students should complete 375 hours of langua instruction for a B1 level

## Defining Blended Learning

- Hibryd, mixed, semipresencial
- Blended learning is defined as the combination of instructional modalities (or delivery media). Thomson (2002)
- Blended learning is also defined as the combination of instructional methods. Driscoll (2002)
- Blended learning is the combination of online and face-to-face instruction. Young (2002)

## Defining Blended Learning

- "finding a harmonious balance between online access to knowledge and face -to -face human interaction" Osguthorpe & Graham (2003)
- "thoughtful integration of classroom face -to -face learning experiences with online experiences" . Garrison, D.R. & Kanuka, H. (2004)

# BL Models

- **Rotation model**— students rotate between learning modalities, one of which is online learning.
- **Flex model**—online learning is the backbone of student learning. Students move on an individually customized, fluid schedule among learning modalities, and the teacher provide face-to-face support on a flexible and adaptive as-needed basis.
- **A Self-Blend model**—students take one or more courses entirely online with an online teacher and at the same time continue to have face to face educational experiences.
- **Enriched Virtual model**—students divide their time between attending face to face instruction and learning remotely using online delivery of content and instruction

http://www.christenseninstitute.org/blended-learning-model-definitions/

# Defining EGAP

Teaching communication skills in English required for study purposes is the essence of English for Academic Purposes (EAP);
(EGAP) English for General Academic Purposes deals with teaching students skills and academic features of language common for different disciplines.
(ESAP) English for Specific Academic Purposes focuses on teaching English typical o a specific scientific discipline.

# Defining EGAP

- EGAP isolates skills associated with study activities such as listening to lectures; reading textbooks, articles and other material; writing essays; dissertations and reports.
- EGAP main objective is to equip learners with the necessary skills to complete tasks in a general academic setting (Jordan, 1997)

# Defining EGAP

There are following factors given for taking an EGAP approach:

- language teachers are considered to “lack the training, expertise and confidence to teach subject-specific conventions”;
- EGAP is easier for students with limited English proficiency;
- EGAP is more likely to develop its own independent subject knowledge and skills;
- EGAP prepare students for unpredictable assignments and tasks.

# Course Implementation

- Students have 4 levels of English Instruction (384 hours)
- Medical students have one additional level (level 5)
- Open Lingua adopted a different learning approach for these particular students focusing on their needs:
  - Blended Learning
  - Communicative Language Teaching
  - Based on task
  - EGAP approach
- The purpose of this course was to integrate students' academic skills in English with their particular discipline.

# Course design

| Unit | Task | Platform Activities | Academic Skills |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Describe the medical history of a patient. | Parts of the human body and common diseases. | Taking notes, presenting, filling forms |
| 2 | Write a medical prescription for a patient | Healthy habits, medicines and giving advices | Analyzing information, Summarizing information, Argue |
| 3 | Suggest a healthy diet | Food, eating habits, daily care | Contrasting information, writing suggestions , giving advice and supporting reasons. |
| 4 | Presenting a medical Innovation | Medical breakthroughs | Taking notes, Presenting, Analyzing information, arguing. |

# Course design

- 16 sessions, content divided in 4 units, each unit has a particular task to develop and practice academic skills)
- Platform provides opportunities for students to practice the language out the classroom
- Platform allows practice for students in their particular discipline
- Platform Supports students development of Academic skills.
- Platform allows teacher and students to record their performance.
- Platform Assessment tools (Initial test and progression test).
- Assessment is based on students' performance in each unit task.
- Self-assessment recognizes students' improvement in their language skills.

# Positive aspects

- High rate in the use of the Platform 2013
  - 7 courses
  - 85% (93) students started platform instruction
  - 15% (16) students didn´t start platform instruction.
  - 85% content assigned from the platform completed
  - 97% content correct.

# Positive aspects

- Adaptability of the platform to students needs.
- Appropriate integration between face to face and virtual instruction.
- Students are highly involved in the learning process. (Interaction, participation, motivation)
- Focus on language learning through real situations, instead of focusing in form.
- Teachers can identify easily students learning outcomes.

# Negative aspects

- Teachers and students lack of technology skills.
- Students' low level of English from previous courses.
- Lack of continuity of teachers at the University.
- Lack of training for teachers for this particular course

# Conclusions

- Many learning opportunities are offered by new technologies but they are not fully exploited, mainly owing to the lack of relevant training offered to teachers and even students. Davies (2002)

- A blended learning design represents a reconceptualization and reorganization of the teaching and learning dynamic, starting with various specific contextual needs and contingencies (e.g., discipline, developmental level, and resources). In this respect, no two blended learning designs are identical. Garrison, D.R. & Kanuka, H. (2004)

# Conclusions

- New technologies not only can help teachers enhance their pedagogical practice, but also assist students in their learning, therefore it is necessary to find the strategies to make it possible in a particular environment.

- Students' motivation and commitment increase when learning and teaching processes are more relevant to their particular discipline.

- The need to research on the processes of Blended learning in the Open Lingua program.

# References


- Becta (2002), Educational research into Managed Learning Environments/Virtual Learning Environments – a selection of abstracts. Coventry: Becta
- Driscoll, M. (2002, March 1, 2002). Blended Learning: Let's get beyond the hype. *elearning,* 54.
- Garrison, D.R. & Kanuka, H. (2004). Blended learning: Uncovering its transformative potential in higher education. The Internet and Higher Education, 7, 95-105.
- Osguthorpe, R.T. & Graham, C.R. (2003). Blended learning environments, definitions and directions. The Quarterly Review of Distance Education, 4(3), 227-233.
- Thomson, I. (2002). *Thomson job impact study: The next generation of corporate learning*. Thompson, Inc. Retrieved July 7, 2003, from the World Wide Web: http://www.netg.com/DemosAndDownloads/Downloads/JobImpact.pdf

# References


- Yelland, N., 2001, “Girls, mathematics and technology”, en B. Atweh , H. Forgasz y B. Nebres, eds., 66 Revista Educación y Pedagogía, vol. 23, núm. 59, enero-abril, 2011. Sociocultural Research on Mathematics Education: An International Perspective, Mahwah, NJ, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, pp. 392-411.
- Young, J. R. (2002, March 22). 'Hybrid' teaching seeks to end the divide between traditional and online instruction. *Chronicle of Higher Education,* pp. A33.

Jorge Hugo Muñoz Marín
Programa Open Lingua
Jorgeh.munoz@ucc.edu.co


Universidad Cooperativa
de Colombia