

DEVELOPING LINGUISTIC COMPETENCE OF B1 LEVEL LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN THE ONLINE EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract. online courses are a new way of learning anywhere you go. The new software's are making it easy to use for anyone who might not be familiar with the technology. Sitting in a traditional classroom for hours and hours compared to being able to study anywhere in the world. Leaving behind the traditional heavy books that we have to carry around the whole day, now all we need is our electronic devices. Although online course was accepted by a lot of people, I was not ready to leave the traditional classroom. The fear of managing and organize my own time for the online classes held be back because when managing time is in my hands, I am able to work at my own pace and whenever I like. After examining several conceptual elements of linguistic competence of B1 level language learners through online educational environment, this article presents a study analyzing the effects of online teaching in the linguistic competence of B1 level language learners. The results, students' linguistic competence could be improved in the online educational environment with the help of variety of specific methods.

Keywords: *online, linguistic competence, mobile, wireless technology, Likert scale, quantitative, qualitative, electric devices.*

Introduction

Online distance learning is offered not only in post-secondary distance education institutions but in traditional universities as well. With advances in mobile and wireless technologies, completing academic studies anywhere anytime should become feasible. Research in distance education and online learning has focused on computer-mediated communication, instructional design, learner characteristics, educational technology, and learning outcomes. However, little attention has been given to where exactly learners do their learning and studying and how the physical and social aspects of the physical environment within which the online learner is physically embedded (e.g., the home) supports and constrains learning activities. Various methods can be used, such as one-on-one video calls, group video calls, and webinars. You can start teaching from any location (home, coffee shop, co-working space) and enroll students from various backgrounds and geographical areas. Virtually any topic or skill can be taught online, but popular subjects include languages, math, sciences, and business. To teach online, you need to be reasonably comfortable with computers and the internet. This is because interactions with students will take place through messaging platforms, email, and video calls. Also, many online teachers need to create digital resources to share with their students, such as PowerPoint presentations, videos, audio lectures, and pdf guides. The best thing about teaching online is that it's accessible to so many people. As the education expert Elliot Masie, said, "We need to bring learning to people instead of people to learning." Besides that, Devoney Looser, a professor of English at Arizona State University, said: "Anyone who's taught an on-the-ground class has looked out into the classroom and seen boredom or disconnection. By comparison, my online students were choosing when to log on to do their work. They seemed very tuned in when they did ... I found them, as a group, exceptionally dedicated, motivated, and talented".

In linguistics, linguistic competence is the system of unconscious knowledge that one knows when they know a language. It is distinguished from linguistic performance, which includes all other factors that allow one to use one's language in practice. In approaches to linguistics which adopt this distinction, competence would normally be considered responsible for the fact that "I like ice cream" is a possible sentence of English, the particular proposition that it denotes, and the particular sequence of phones that it consists of. Performance, on the other hand, would be responsible for the real-time processing required to produce or comprehend it, for the particular role it plays in a discourse, and for the particular sound wave one might produce while uttering it. The distinction is widely adopted in formal linguistics, where competence and performance are typically

studied independently. However, it is not used in other approaches including functional linguistics and cognitive linguistics, and it has been criticized in particular for turning performance into a wastebasket for hard-to-handle phenomena. So, what are the best methods of improving linguistic competences of B1 level language learners?

Methods

The research implies a mixed-model design comprising a students' questionnaire (a quantitative tool) and students' essays (a qualitative tool). Quantitative data analysis was done applying grammar test which was appropriate for intermediate level language learners, qualitative data analysis – applying discourse analysis. The current study presents the results of the research conducted within B1 level language learners focusing on linguistic competences in the online educational environment. The results depict students' opinion on the linguistic competences in the online educational condition during three months and their improvements during this time. In order to evaluate the efficiency of the courses created summative evaluation research was conducted applying a students' survey and analyzing students' essays. The course piloting lasted for 3 months. Students had an introductory workshop to get familiar with the interactive learning platform, then they did online tasks independently, in parallel they had regular group meetings to do tasks and case studies. After the course piloting the students filled in evaluation questionnaires and wrote feedback essays. Zoom platform is used during the session.

The research aim is by conducting summative evaluation research to evaluate the efficiency of the methods and methodologies applied in the courses designed online and their application to develop students' linguistic competence as well as enhance relevant 21st century skills required in their field in the future. The research problem is associated with developing learners' linguistic competence - how to select appropriate tools and methodologies that could develop learners' language competence at the same time enhancing the development of their 21st century skills and how to motivate learners to apply the tools created for their autonomous learning.

Results and discussion

30 students were involved in the evaluation research. Students' profile: 15 students 9 A grade and other 15 students 9 B grades of school 279. 14 of them were B1 level students, 16 of them were A2 level students and questionnaire comprised 100 Likert scale type opinion variables. Additionally, the questionnaire also included several questions on respondents' profile (country, languages spoken, language levels, age group, field of studies and the number of years they have studied the target language). It covered the evaluation of the learning platform. The questionnaire was applied during the post course piloting session. The feedback essays were written to evaluate each of the courses done. Students were encouraged to record their experience while piloting the courses, their overall impression, positive and negative aspects, their commentary and others. All these research has been done online. The research implies a mixed-model design involving a quantitative tool - a students' questionnaire and a qualitative tool - students' essays. Quantitative data analysis was done applying descriptive and inferential statistics tests by SPSS: means (57%-73%), modes (70%-85%), medians (63%-75%), ranges (52%-40%); Students' essay results showed noticeable difference during the three months: means - 53%-77%, modes - 64%-86%, medians - 69%-76%, range- 56%- 41%.

Conclusion

Students highly evaluated the learning online and the courses created. They found the learning in the online atmosphere useful, visually appealing, interesting, interactive and creative, well-structured and it was easy for them to understand how to do the tasks and to understand their results. Students acknowledged that the online learning under investigation had enabled them to develop their knowledge of professional lexis, pronunciation and grammar habits and gain certain useful field knowledge. It favored the development of students' linguistic competence, the relevant 21st century skills and according to their self-evaluation motivated them to become autonomous learners. It also helped students to acquire some specific subject-related knowledge, especially developing language competence and enhance students' field knowledge.

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