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Designing an ESP Blended Course for Manufacturing and Engineering Sciences
Master’s Students at Tlemcen University

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ABSTRACT

The integration of technology in general and blended learning in particular in Higher education has brought many reconsiderations to English for Specific Purposes teaching and learning. Along this line, the aim of the conducted research work is first, to describe the situation of ESP teaching and analyze the language needs of students in the Department of Manufacturing and Engineering Sciences at Tlemcen University, second, to develop a blended course and respective materials that respond to the learners’ expectations, then, to assess the impact of such a course on Manufacturing and Engineering students’ achievement. For this purpose, an experimental case study was undertaken. To collect the necessary data for this case study, the investigator employed two questionnaires administered to first year Master’s students and ESP teachers, and interviews addressed to subject-specialists and administrators in the Department of Manufacturing Engineering Sciences at Tlemcen University and workplace managers. Regarding the experimental phase, a pretest, a post-test and an evaluation checklist were used. Relying on both quantitative and qualitative data analyses, the results revealed that Manufacturing and Engineering students were highly motivated to learn English as this language plays an important role in their educational and vocational career and were namely in need of speaking and listening in parallel with reading and writing practice. Furthermore, the stakeholders showed a positive attitude towards the integration of blended learning as part of the ESP course due to its importance in creating a context for English teaching and learning. Among the most significant conclusions drawn from the experimental design was that blended leaning approach ensured a trend towards working with a more real language which makes the students focus on skills rather than other language aspects. It was regarded as a means that brought the students’ needs to their ends, and henceforth, helped them develop their content knowledge and promote the four language skills with more emphasis on listening and speaking.
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