

English for Specific Purposes via Distance Learning: Opportunities for Academic and Professional Qualification

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Abstract. The objective of the course “English for Specific Purposes” (E.S.P), focusing on textual genres developed in a virtual environment, is to enable course participants in understanding and interpreting texts in the English language as well as involving the students of the Linguistics Course at UEG in mentoring activities. This paper discusses an extension project of E.S.P via Distance Learning in the State University of Goiás-UEG that presents in its capillary a multicampi structure of 42 units. UEG aims at the integral formation of the human being to a socio-professional solidarity performance and the concern for the exercise of citizenship. This project reveals the UEG policy of engagement and participation in integrated development of the state of Goiás besides aligning the purpose the university to prepare its students to participate in the Science Without Borders program.

Keywords: Project extension, Distance Learning, English for Specific Purposes via Distance Learning, Academic and professional qualifications.

1 English for Specific Purposes” (E.S.P)

This paper discusses the extension project of “English for Specific Purposes” (E.S.P) via Distance Learning in the State University of Goiás-UEG that presents in its capillary a multicampi structure of 42 units. In its policy of engagement and participation in integrated development of the state of Goiás, UEG aims at the integral formation of the human being to a socio-professional solidarity performance and the concern for the exercise of citizenship.

This project proposes to enhance socio-economic and cultural life of the academic community (students and teachers), thus enhancing their chances for integration and / or consolidation in the labor market, as well as integrate the university community to society in a joint action with full citizenship construction.

Distance Learning, part of a broader educational process of innovations, which includes the integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the educational processes (BELLONI, 2002) is the link between the University and the community in Goiás.

In view of Aranha (2002) the interaction of individuals in a formal and even informal organization is associated with their acquired knowledge, developed skills and attitudes in converting their skills in the most essential function of human life: work. The adaptability of the human being to the most vital social activities, work, allows the use of their potential to provide for their own needs. Participants' difficulties in continuing their professional development goals by factors such as time availability, locomotion troubles and objectivity of the course failed attempts at resolving the teachers' problem. As for the students of Linguistics obstacles in practice the knowledge acquired in their graduation.

Thus, given the limitations encountered by the target audience that sometimes are overcome by its competitors due to lack of training, this English for Specific Purposes pilot project in the form of distance learning aims to expand the opportunities for integration into the labor market to the Linguistics students in the UEG offering a consistent and skilled preparation. The Linguistics students will be able to effectively work out in their area.

In another aspect the project directs to UEG teachers as a grant proposal to hone their skills in understanding and interpreting English texts in order to facilitate the insertion in different knowledge areas in post-graduation courses. This duality strategic process for the project concerns to guide both participants as Linguistics students in the use of English for reading and interpreting texts and offers an opportunity for Linguistics students to work in the area of tutoring in an English for Specific Purposes Course in the UEG. These students will receive ongoing training to perform their activities.

This project is founded on methodological aspect focuses on the development of students' ability to extract the message that contains the text. Thus, the English for Specific Purposes Course focusing on instrumental textual genres will be developed in virtual environment, involving Linguistics students of UEG in tutoring activities. Tutoring has become a constitutive part of the distance learning mode, which occupies a key place in the development of courses in this way to make education (PRETI, 2001). So it is up to tutoring, mediation and guidance between students and the resources needed for the realization of "didactic conversation".

In its instrumental approach this course demands that students need to take control over their learning process, learning to overcome the difficulties they will face when reading a text in a foreign language, developing strategies that allow them to solve understanding problems at both the content of the text as the linguistic level. The teaching material prepared exposes the student tasks that take them to reflect on the meaning of the text, and also to focus and analyze the English language in concrete use situations by reading in a variety of textual genre, leveraging the practical opportunities of interpretation and understanding of various communication styles.

In his work, Swales (1990) focuses attention on the analysis of textual genres, emphasizing its use for both academic situations and for professional contexts. The methodology of distance learning, as well as the techniques and reading strategies,

among them scanning and skimming, inference, flexibility and basic structure of English will be used in the process of teaching and learning (MUNHOZ, 2000). The operation of the project for 2013 was approved by the referees of the Pro-Dean for Extension and Culture of UEG therefore future research could be conducted to analyze the results of the project.

For the development of Distant Learning actions that is proposed in this project, we believe that it is necessary to maintain a communication network that enables the connection of multiple units where the course is offered. Therefore, it is imperative to organize physical structure, pedagogical and academic to guarantee:

- Maintenance of a multidisciplinary team to guide the course participant; Appointment of coordination that will be responsible for monitoring the course both administrative and pedagogical;
- Maintenance of laboratories in the units that support the communication required for current arrangements of the course;
- Organization of a system of communication between units of UEG and UNUEAD.

Through the Virtual Learning Environment Moodle, students will receive feedback on their performance, guidelines and exchange of information with respect to the content covered in developed exercises especially those that have been answered incorrectly, leading to new elaborations and referrals reassessment.

The English course will be taught instrumental in two modules, developed in distance mode, with a total duration of 200 hours, spread over eight months. From action at a distance in a virtual environment, the following topics will be covered with their workload:

- Module 1 - Getting Started - 100 hours
- Module 2 - Citizen of the global environment - 100 hours

The course participants reach 75% (seventy five percent) of frequency and perform the activities required during the course and present a conclusive work will be certified. As well as for students of the Linguistics Course that act with tutors and report performance of their students. Certificates will be issued by this entity, signed by the director of the University Unit of Distance Education and the Course Coordinator. The certification will show support from Extension, Culture and Student Affairs Pro – Deanship, as its delegated power.

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