EMPLOYING EDUCATIONAL WEBSITES IN EFL TEACHING

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Blended learning is already a known term which includes both face-to-face and online learning and which is used by many teachers around the world. The use of information and communication technologies has been found to improve access to student attitudes towards learning. [1, p. 95] Nowadays some teachers use websites and weblogs to make their lessons more interactive. These are used to publish instructional materials that the students can access to and where the students can make comments. Teachers can also let students set up their own blogs for a particular subject or for several subjects and then assign tasks to students. The tasks should be done using blogs (i.e., publishing articles and sharing them with other students). While the students develop their own blogs, teachers can observe and monitor the students' progress, and identify the learning needs that have not been considered (e.g., students may directly or indirectly express their doubts on blogs) [2].

Using websites in EFL teaching may also help to achieve some important competences, such as: communicative competences, intercultural competence and digital literacy. Speaking about communicative competence should be mentioned that it consists of four competence areas: linguistic, sociolinguistic, discourse, and strategic. All of these refer to a learner's ability to use language to communicate successfully. The teaching of culture is considered a very important part of language teaching that is why multimedia is a great tool in developing intercultural competence by means of video, audio, graphics etc. And of course, digital literacy which is defined by Jones-Kavalier and Flannigan as "a person's ability to perform tasks effectively in a digital environment..."[3, p.58]. It can be developed at the same time as acquiring a second language because it is necessary as the use of technologies is changing every day.

For the practical part of the thesis was chosen "EFL Blogging for Moldovan Teachers", which is a project that aims to train 25 Moldovan EFL teachers from the regions to integrate blogs in their teaching practice. Teachers from different parts of the country joined the project to learn how to use the innovative technologies in order to employ them in their classes. Teachers were assigned to fulfill different tasks as the way to enhance online tools. This kind of project is very useful as it trains the teacher helping in this way the student in process of learning.

Blogs already gained popularity among students as well as among teachers and it is increasing with an incredible speed, due to some advantages:
- People can learn of the topics posted all over the world;
- Promote critical thinking;
- Help students in their writing skills, and learn the etiquettes used for the Internet;
- Share articles, videos, opinions with people outside their community etc.

Christopher Pappas, the Founder CEO of The eLearning Industry's Network gives some clues on how can teachers and students use blogs:
- Teachers can use blogs to publish assignments, resources, and keep students and even parents up to date on class events, due dates, and content being covered.
- Teachers can also use blogs to help students' master content and improve their writing skills.

– Students can use blogs to publish their writing and educate others on a particular topic.
– Students can also create blogs for the chess club or the yearbook club, the football team or the upcoming prom[4].

In conclusion it should be mentioned that the traditional classroom is changing worldwide and present and future careers are dependent on strong computer skills, in this way blogging helps students develop necessary skills for their continuing education and gainful employment. We should consider the world of blogging as a creative, funny way to teach whithin the curriculum and cover other learning standards at the same time.

References

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