

Proceedings

B-Learning Teaching Method for the Development of the Teaching and Learning Process: An Experience in the Subject Educational Processes and Contexts of the Master's Degree in Teaching Compulsory Secondary and Upper Secondary School, Vocational Training and Foreign Language Teaching [†]

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Abstract: During the 2017/2018 school year, in the Master's Degree Program developed at the Campus of Ceuta, in the area of Educational Processes and Contexts, we applied the B-learning method, associated with other methods, such as cooperative, collaborative, interactive and by inquiry, through the Prado platform. The experience has been developed with a total of 72 students, who made a portfolio, assessing, among other aspects, the development of the subject.

Keywords: B-learning; virtual platform; cooperative; collaborative; interactive

1. Introduction

The B-learning or blended learning refers to a mixed learning, combined training, hybrid learning or blended learning, which offers face-to-face and distance learning trying to get the best part of all of them [1]. This type of teaching requires the use of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), and therefore, it is necessary a process of training focused on them [2]. Apart from that, it allows students and teachers to access from anywhere and at any time using a virtual platform.

During the face-to-face classes, the personal links are favoured as well as the activities which require the presence of the student in class [3]. In this methodology, the best of each teaching form is chosen.

The role of the different figures of the teaching and learning process changes. The teacher, apart from transmitting different kinds of knowledge, he/she uses different types of communication, has different ways of observing the learning and assesses the acquisition of knowledge as a result of the learning processes [4], reinforcing the learning with role play strategies, practices... [5].

This implies a change in the education methodology applied. It goes from a rote-learning model to an active methodology, where the learner is the main character, learning by doing. The student must know what to do with the contents they worked on, apply them to real situations which are close to them, as well as know how to do and how to be [6].

All this provokes some interesting challenges for the theories of teaching and learning, since it is looked from a teacher-centred approach to a student-centred approach [7].

In order to carry out all this, it is necessary to use the Information and Communication Technologies, which will offer the possibility of making the time-space training period more flexible at the same time as it facilitates the access to different contents which can be diverse [8], offering greater support for the student and the teacher from the e-learning platforms [9] which, among other resources, will be those that allow to implement the B-learning.

With all this, apart from offering new motivating training possibilities, we adapt to the new times where students, using various networks, can carry out cultural, social and education debates that enlarge and expand their learning possibilities [10].

2. Experience Development

The training process is carried out in the Master's Degree in Teaching Compulsory Secondary and Upper Secondary School, Vocational Training and Foreign Language Teaching in the campus of Ceuta, specifically in the subject "Processes and Education Contexts" during the year 2017/2018 with a total number of 73 students. The development of the classes is focused on B-learning.

In this case, the subject was clearly divided into two perspectives, a virtual one and a face-to-face one which provoke some changes, both in the methodological strategies and in the assessment, specifically in the mark criteria.

The virtual plane was divided, in turn, into three sections: a theoretical one, where the theoretical contents that will be worked on a daily basis are presented, so that the students can read it before attending class, obtaining a general idea of the aspects to deal with; a practical one, where the student, be it using a forum, wiki, chat or sending homework, reflects the aspects to be worked on during face-to-face development, as well as favouring the cooperative and collaborative work; and the last one to know more, where links to educational laws or research articles related to the subject under discussion are presented.

To follow and guide the process, a WhatsApp group was created so as to resolve any question of the students that may arise during the development of the activities.

The face-to-face level was used to apply several teaching methods, be it cooperative, collaborative, interactive or learning through inquiry, with all the contents that will be applied in class. The most important thing in this aspect is that the students are the center of the teaching-learning process, while the teacher is only a guide trying to lead the students in the development of the activities.

Taking a practical example, in order to draw up the curricular proposal, based on the content worked during the classes, the student must read the theory at home and the face-to-face period is destined to the development of a curricular proposal in groups, by means of a wiki created in the platform. During that period, the teacher can approach each group so as to solve the questions that could arise at that moment. Once the class is finished, the groups complete the activity in the virtual period. These same students are who, under the supervision of the teacher, help the mates to finish the task using the forum of the platform and the WhatsApp group.

3. Research Method

The research is a descriptive one, applying an analysis from a quantitative approach. The data collection was carried out using a portfolio where the students should have assessed the subject and should have established some improvement proposals when the academic period is finished. So as to carry out the descriptive analysis, some key ideas from the opinions given by the students were obtained. All these opinions were compared among them and the common elements were used.

4. Results

The 93% of the students valued in a positive way the pedagogical development of the subject, the dynamism of the classes, the attention given during the sessions, the acquired learning, the

approach to the reality of the presented contents, although they indicate the work load of the subject has been high. 7% of the students did not value positively the subject due to they were not accustomed to this way of developing the class, so they prefer the expository method. Some of the most important assessments are the following:

“My experience with this subject was very positive. It is true that it has kept me in suspense during all time, but I think I learnt a lot, although there are some aspects I need to improve, for example, my ability to speak in public” [Student 13].

“The subject was very interesting, dynamic and educational. I have learnt a lot about education which was very good for me because I did not come from studies directly related to teaching, so I needed to learn a basis about education. In addition to this, considering my professional future, I learnt how to develop a didactic program and some notions about teaching units. I also liked to work in class with different methodologies which will be used in our future teaching practice” [Student 23].

“The attraction to the subject increased gradually. At first I did not see clearly what was presented, there was much content and new dynamics for me. I thought I would not learn anything. But as time goes by, I began to understand better all the actions and names used in class. In addition to this, I could discover a practical aspect, since it has given me future ideas if I have to face a class alone. Finally, I recognise I did not get bored and that it was the subject in which I learnt the most” [Student 32].

“This subject meant a change for me on a broad scale, and I feel it in this way because in order to conclude generalizing among the most remarkable aspects I lived during this time, I have to say that it has been the subject in which I learnt the most. Among all the things I learnt, apart from acquiring them, I would like to highlight the great variety of terms related to the educational field that were completely unknown to me till then, and now I am able not only to understand them but also to apply them. For example, I did not know what a flipped classroom consisted of and it has been one of the most important things for me because it is easy to learn what they taught you before” [Student 34].

It was a good experience, different from what we had learnt so far. It was an enriching experience in all aspects, each point of the subject was interesting because it was connected to each activity we carried out alone or in groups and with this kind of activities we learnt; since we really learn by doing. [Student 47]

“I consider that it was the only subject that taught me so far without having a pile of papers on the table to study by heart even though we worked hard by doing a great amount of activities. It was the only one which approached me to the profession showing that the theoretical contents can be learnt in a practical way using some samples of daily methodologies” [Student 56].

5. Conclusions

Once the transcripts of the interviews made to the students of the Master’s Degree in Teaching Compulsory Secondary and Upper Secondary School, Vocational Training and Foreign Language Teaching in the campus of Ceuta, it is concluded that the experience using this innovative practice and a method of blended teaching was a very positive experience.

The fact of applying the B-learning method in the subject “Processes and Educational Contexts” has generated a great expectation, attracting the attention of the student by its dynamism, participation and work in different environments during the development of the subject.

The classes have acquired a differentiating nuance with respect to the classes that follow a more traditional model, focused on the pure transmission of information by the teacher. In our case, with the use of the B-learning method, a high level of training was achieved in each of the sessions developed. All this is reflected in the large amount of information they managed to acquire in a short time, without memorizing piles of papers, thanks to the application of classes with a high practical component, since the theoretical contents were located in the virtual platform, allocating the face-to-

face time to the generation of group dynamics, fostering the interactions between teacher-student and student-student while solving the questions arisen as a result of a more autonomous work carried out by the students, obtaining high levels of motivation and participation on the grounds that they felt the main important and necessary agents in the learning process.

Furthermore, the students approached to the practical reality of the contents presented in the subject producing a theoretical-practical connection at all times. Regarding their motivation, it has been appreciated it flourished in a gradual way from lowest to highest as the teaching and learning process was developing and they were experiencing new dynamics and new ways of learning.

In short, this method of teaching was very original for students in general since to date, they had not developed a teaching and learning process of such innovative features because they always followed a traditional teaching based on the direct instruction and the simple transmission of knowledge.

To conclude, the students recognise that these new methods require a lot of effort and continuous work but, on the contrary, they acquire more solid knowledge about the subject. The assessments offered in the portfolios were positive proposing that in the future, the theory instead of being written should be presented orally using the teachers' recordings which will foster the mobile learning at any time and everywhere.

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