

be harmonized by developing a cultural and emotional intelligence to work in a multicultural environment through drive, knowledge, strategy and action.

The analysis of the literature on the issue and the results of the experiment showed the importance and necessity of joint creative efforts of teachers and students in the development of programme material using research projects, the need to test in practice the theoretical knowledge, taking into account the new conditions of the digital economy and globalization, the efficiency of testing the results obtained at conferences and diplomatic readings.

The experience once again convinces that students' research work can be successfully carried out in combination with the teachers' research within the framework of the course studied.

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ONLINE GUEST LECTURERS' POTENTIAL FOR TEACHING ESL STUDENTS

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The aim of the present paper is to reveal online guest lecturers' potential for teaching business correspondence to ESL students. The article examines the most recent breakthroughs in the learning process, the use of multimedia technologies in the classroom, the advantages and disadvantages of having online guest lecturers for ESL classes, the methods ESL instructors employ. While researching this topic, we conducted an experiment and compared the techniques the ESL instructor and online guest lecturer

used to teach effective writing of résumés and cover letters. Therefore, a lot of attention is paid to the analysis of the tutor's and the guest lecturer's teaching styles.

Key words: online guest lecturer; videoconferencing applications; students' motivation; résumé and cover letter writing; online teaching-learning methods; business correspondence.

ОПЫТ ИСПОЛЬЗОВАНИЯ ОНЛАЙН-ЛЕКТОРОВ В ПРЕПОДАВАНИИ АНГЛИЙСКОГО ЯЗЫКА КАК ИНОСТРАННОГО

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Цель данной статьи – изучить потенциал онлайн-лекторов для преподавания курса деловой переписки для студентов, изучающих английский язык как иностранный, в преподавании английского языка. В статье рассматриваются основные нововведения в образовательном процессе, использование мультимедийных технологий, преимущества и недостатки участия онлайн-лекторов в процессе обучения, а также приёмы, используемые преподавателями при обучении студентов английскому языку. В ходе исследований мы провели эксперимент и сравнили методы, которыми пользовались преподаватель, работающий непосредственно в классе, и онлайн-лектор. В статье уделяется особое внимание анализу их стиля преподавания.

Ключевые слова: гость-лектор онлайн; компьютерные приложения для видеоконференции; мотивирование студентов; написание резюме и сопроводительного письма; методы для обучения онлайн; деловая переписка.

Nowadays ESL instructors spend a lot of time integrating different strategies into the learning process. In-class games and interviews are just a few examples of this phenomenon. However, due to technological advancement most English learning techniques are multimedia-oriented. With a stable Internet connection and interactive whiteboards available at most universities all over the world, having online guest lecturers for classes is becoming more and more common.

A guest lecturer is a respected faculty member or professional who knows the ins and outs of his (her) subject area and uses his (her) knowledge to acquaint students with the world of work. In the past, guest lecturers were often invited to attend physical classes. Today guest lecturers rely on videoconferencing applications like Skype, Google Meet and Zoom to get in touch with their audience. This is why they are often called 'online guest lecturers'.

The aim of this article is to reveal online guest lecturers' potential for teaching ESL students. To achieve the aim, the following tasks have been put forward:

- 1) To study the advantages and disadvantages of having online guest lecturers for ESL classes,
- 2) To conduct a survey revealing ESL students' opinions on lessons with online guest lecturers,
- 3) To invite an online guest lecturer to teach a group of ESL students,
- 4) To carry out a questionnaire revealing ESL students' fondness for the material taught,
- 5) To analyse the results of the questionnaire.

Guest lecturers can brighten up ESL classes for a number of reasons. First of all, communicating with a professional is a golden opportunity for students to get free

speech practice of all their active vocabulary and grammar. Classrooms are perfect for controlled practice, but it is hard to create challenging situations that would make them switch to free practice. Case studies are an alternative to that, but students have to talk to each other and the instructor, which limits their language environment. Having someone new for free practice with the focus on the target vocabulary and grammar is a great way of mastering a certain topic as a part of an ESL course.

Secondly, online guest lecturers provide exposure to real-life situations and documents. This can be explained by the fact that instead of searching for examples in textbooks, lecturers give examples from their experience. They also refrain from sounding unnatural and put great emphasis on intonation. This allows ESL students to observe and then implement their language skills in practice.

Thirdly, having online guest lecturers for ESL classes allows students to gain confidence that their language skills are useful and applicable in real-life situations. Many students doubt that they will need the vocabulary they are taught in their workplace. Using it with someone other than an ESL instructor, someone from their future industry, proves their knowledge is legitimate and will be a valuable asset at work.

Another bullet point revolves around ESL students' incentive. By seeing someone who deployed their English speaking skills to find a job and become successful in their field they can get inspiration from real-life examples to make important decisions concerning their career and the role English should play in it. In a word, online guest lecturers give ESL students motivation to start thinking about work-related goals and ambitions.

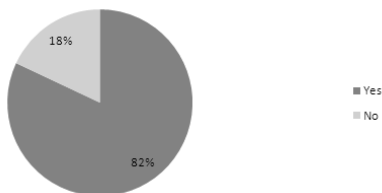
Finally, an online guest lecturer from industry could expand students' knowledge of the market and business ethics beyond their home country. Getting to know certain differences in communication, business etiquette, vocabulary usage and business processes in their selected industry makes ESL students more well-prepared for working with people from these countries and cultures. This awareness is key in succeeding in working with them in the future.

Despite this, some ESL students might argue that such lessons require a fair amount of technical knowledge and depend too much on one's Internet connection. To find out whether the advantages of inviting online guest lecturers to ESL classes outweigh these minor disadvantages we conducted a questionnaire. It consisted of the following questions:

- 1) Are you interested in having online guest lecturers for ESL classes?
- 2) How often should lectures with online guest speakers be held?

Diagram 1

Are you interested in having online guest lecturers for ESL classes?



Having questioned 44 ESL students, we found out that the proposal was accepted by about 82% of students. Our findings also showed that about 55% of the people questioned wanted to have such lessons once a month, 35% expected to have them twice a month and 10% mentioned that they wanted to have them once a week.

The results of the questionnaire proved that the majority of ESL students were interested in this topic, for which reason we moved on to the next task. We divided ESL students into two groups, both of which had to cover the topic of résumé and cover letter writing. An ESL instructor had to work with the first group, which consisted of 24 students. An online guest lecturer had to go through this topic with the second group, which consisted of 20 ESL students.

The ESL instructor started the lecture by asking her students about their day. Then, she introduced them to the new topic. The first thing she did was to explain why a résumé (CV in British English) and a cover letter were central to the hiring process. To help her students retain more information she divided the lecture in two parts: résumé and cover letter writing. In the first part of the lesson she emphasized that although there were several types of résumés, all of them had to include the candidate's personal information, his (her) objective, education and work experience. Afterwards, she asked her students to work in pairs and discuss what they would write in each section of their résumés. While they were talking to each other, she listened attentively and made useful remarks. Then, the students were shown several examples of résumés. With the help of the ESL instructor, they managed to analyse the structure of these templates. The second half of the lecture was devoted to cover letters. This time, there was no need to explain everything from the very beginning, since résumés writing was similar to cover letter writing. In fact, the material given seemed to be almost the same to students. At that point she saw the need for clarification. She asked her group to compare and contrast résumés and cover letter templates. As a result, the students managed to analyse the length, the structure, the contents and the style of these two pieces of writing. At the end of the lecture, the students thanked their tutor for her help and insight.

Dzmitry Yaltykhau, an IT consultant in business analysis, product management and organisation transformation, was to teach the second group. In the course of the lecture he shared his experience of writing résumés and cover letters for foreign companies. He started by asking the students to introduce themselves and tell him what they expected from the lecture. After that, Dzmitry explained the basics of résumé writing to his students. To do this he used real-life examples and a presentation full of visuals. When he finished explaining, he asked every student a question about résumés. Later, he commented on their answers. His next move was to show the students his own résumé. It consisted of eight sections: personal information, related experience, responsibilities, references, education, certifications, skills and trainings. The lecturer explained the meaning of each section and gave some ideas concerning their content. Then, with a view to demonstrating the similarities and differences between résumés and cover letters, he showed his group a table with the following sections: subject, greetings, main body, summary and name. The table had only the titles of the sections in it and the students were asked to make an attempt at filling in the table. At first, the students did not know what they should do. However, Yaltykhau encouraged them to write everything they could think of. When everyone filled in

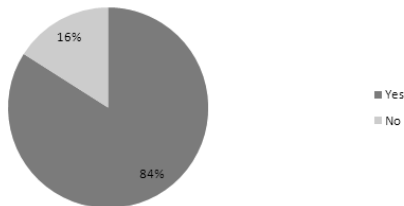
their tables he asked each student to read their version. Afterwards, he showed what was supposed to be in the letter. The students realized that a cover letter shouldn't just repeat the information laid out in a résumés, it should supplement it. Finally, everyone was free to ask Dzmitry questions about his English speaking skills, his professional goals and his life in general. Dzmitry answered those questions with ease, sometimes employing business vocabulary and sometimes turning to a more informal response. When the lecture was over, everyone thanked Dzmitry for his time and expertise.

When the material was covered, we gathered the students from both groups to fill out another survey. This time it had only one question:

1) Do you find the topic useful in your future career?

Diagram 2

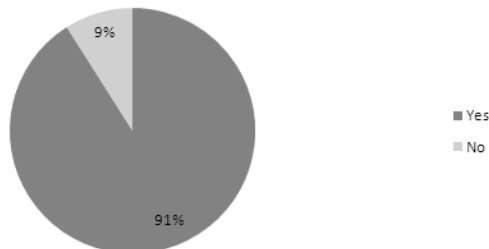
Do you find the topic useful in your future career?



84% of those who were taught by the ESL instructor said that they were interested in her lecture. 16% of the respondents explained that they prioritized practice over theory when it came to résumés and cover letter writing. However, it is impossible not to include theory in a lecture.

Diagram 3

Do you find the topic useful in your future career?



91% of those who attended Dzmitry's lecture said that the material given was valuable. 9% of opponents did not like the idea of having to look at the screen all the time.

Our findings show that there is no universal approach to teaching. Every tutor has his or her methods of bringing out the best in students. In this article we can only analyse what strengths and weaknesses both the ESL instructor and the guest speaker demonstrated.

The ESL instructor's main strength was time-management. Due to this skill she was able to divide the lesson into two parts. She also succeeded in invigorating the lecture with the help of teamwork, as her students liked communicating with one another. She was also attentive enough to spot any mistakes in her students' speech. Finally, she gave a lot of templates to students to read, which boosted their reading skills. As for the drawbacks, the survey revealed that some students did not like the amount of theory given. However, this cannot be considered a drawback, since lectures are supposed to include a lot of theoretical information. Moreover, the amount of theory necessary to cover a topic is dictated by the learning programme, not by the teacher. This indicates that our instructor did everything in her power to help her group grasp the topic.

Dzmitry's lecture was quite popular with students for several reasons. First of all, Dzmitry's background attracted the students' attention to his personality. Apart from being a lecturer he was a specialist from industry, who had written a number of résumés and cover letters to find employment abroad. His experience was a valuable asset for the group, as he explained to them what the best way to find ideas for the content was and described the requirements for this sort of business correspondence. The novelty of the experiment also impressed the students. The way Dzmitry delivered his lecture was different from the way regular teachers would do it. This also proves that a good guest can engage students even when teaching online. Finally, Dzmitry's lecture was so appealing to students because of the fact that he taught his group to listen actively and elicit the main ideas from any source.

We assume that we have revealed some benefits of having online guest lecturers for ESL classes and demonstrated online guest lecturers' potential for teaching ESL students. However, not enough scientific research has been done into this issue. We hope that this situation will change in the near future. In our view, inviting a guest speaker could be an effective innovation in online teaching-learning methods and will help ESL lecturers open their classes to new options.

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