

Teaching English for Specific Purposes to Business Students through Social Media

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Abstract : Using realia to teach English for Specific Purposes (ESP) is a must, as it is thought to be designed to meet the students' real needs in their professional life. Teachers are then expected to offer authentic materials and set students in authentic contexts where their learning outcomes can be highly meaningful. One way of engaging students is using social networks as a way to bridge the gap between their everyday life and their ESP learning outcomes. It is in ESP, particularly in Business English teaching, that our study focuses, as the ongoing process of digitalization is leading firms to use social media to communicate with potential clients. The present paper is aimed at carrying out a case study in which different digital tools are employed as a way to offer a collection of formats businesses are currently using so as to internationalize and advertise their products and services. A secondary objective of our study will then be to progress on the development of multidisciplinary competencies students are to acquire during their degree. A two-phased study will be presented. The first phase will cover the analysis of course tasks accomplished by undergraduate students at the University of Cadiz (Spain) in their third year of the Degree in Business Management and Administration by comparing the results obtained during the years 2019 to 2021. The second part of our study will present a survey conducted to these students in 2021 and 2022 so as to verify their interest in learning new ways to digitalize as well as internationalize their future businesses. Findings will confirm students' interest in working with updated realia in their Business English lessons, as a consequence of their strong belief in the necessity to have authentic contexts and didactic resources. Despite the limitations social media can have as a means to teach business English, students will still find it highly beneficial since it will foster their familiarisation with the digital tools they will need to use when they get to the labour market.

Keywords : English for specific purposes, business English, internationalization of higher education, foreign language teaching

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