5th International Conference on
New Trends in Teaching and Education

16-18 September 2022   Barcelona-Spain

NEW TRENDS
IN TEACHING
AND EDUCATION

Creation and evaluation of an academic blog of tools for the self-correction of written production in English

Imelda Katherine Brady

Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Spain

Abstract

Today's university students are considered digital natives and the use of Information Technologies (ITs) forms a large part of their study and learning. In the context of language studies, applications that help with revisions of grammar or vocabulary are particularly useful, especially if they are open access. There are studies that show the effectiveness of this type of application in the learning of English as a foreign language (Al-Alhdal 2020; Botley and Dillah 2007; Díaz-Negrillo and Fernández-Domínguez 2006) and that using IT can help learners become more autonomous in foreign language acquisition, given that these applications can enhance awareness of the learning process (Mushtaq et al. 2019) and this means that learners are less dependent on the teacher for corrective feedback. We also propose that the exploitation of these technologies also enhances the work of the language instructor wishing to incorporate IT into his/her practice.

In this context, the aim of this paper is to present the creation of a repository of tools that provide support in the writing and correction of texts in English, and the assessment of their usefulness on behalf of university students enrolled in the English Studies Degree. The project seeks to encourage the development of autonomous learning through the acquisition of skills linked to the self-correction of written work in English.

To comply with the above, our methodology follows five phases. First of all, a selection of the main open access, online applications available for the correction of written texts in English is made: AutoCrit, Hemingway, Grammarly, LanguageTool, OutWrite, PaperRater, ProWritingAid, Reverso, Slick Write, Spell Check Plus and Virtual Writing Tutor. Secondly, the functionalities of each of these tools (spelling, grammar, style correction, etc.) are analyzed. Thirdly, explanatory materials (texts and video tutorials) are prepared on each tool. Fourth, these materials are uploaded into a repository of our university in the form of an institutional blog, which is made available to students and the general public. Finally, a survey was designed to collect students' feedback. The survey aimed to analyse the usefulness of the blog and the quality of the explanatory materials as well as the degree of usefulness that students assign to each of the tools offered. In this paper, we present the results of the analysis on data received

from 33 students of the 1st semester of the 21-22 academic year. One result we highlight in our paper is that the students have rated this resource very highly, in addition to offering very

valuable information on the perceived usefulness of the applications provided for them to review.

Our work, carried out within the framework of a teaching innovation project funded by our university, is in line with Santana et al. (2010), who emphasize that teachers need to design methodological strategies that help their students improve the quality of their productions written in English and, by extension, to improve their linguistic competence.

Keywords: Academic blog, open access tools, online self-correction, written production in English, university learning