Designing an AR-Enhanced Application for English for Specific Purposes: Insights from the ESP-XR Project

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ABSTRACT

This paper reports on the content design of a novel application developed for English for Specific Purposes (ESP). When integrated with Augmented Reality (AR)—a technology increasingly recognized for its versatility in both entertainment and mobile learning (Specht, Ternier, & Greller, 2011: 117)—ESP instruction can benefit from more innovative and dynamic pedagogical approaches. AR-driven technologies have shown considerable potential in enhancing learner engagement, interactivity, and contextual understanding (Ibáñez & Delgado-Kloos, 2018), particularly enhancing the process of lexicon acquisition, thus, making language learning more dynamic, engaging, and effective (Fan et al. 2020). While the incorporation of AR into language education has generated a growing body of scholarly research, clear pedagogical guidelines for its effective classroom implementation remain scarce. Within the framework of the PRIN project *Enhancing Competence in English for Specific Purposes via Augmented Reality: A Prototype Platform for Educational and Professional Contexts*, the ESP-XR application was designed to leverage AR technology to deliver immersive educational experiences and increase learner motivation. The application aims to bridge the divide between theoretical research and applied pedagogy in ESP instruction. By analyzing the app's underlying design principles and identifying emerging best practices for AR-supported language education, this study contributes to the broader discourse on digital innovation in English Language Teaching (ELT). Moreover, it offers preliminary recommendations for educators, providing insights into the effective integration of AR to facilitate language acquisition, enhance contextualized learning, and promote a more interactive, learner-centered model of ESP instruction.

Keywords: ESP-XR; AR-enhanced app; ESP; EAP; content design