

Title: Student Perceptions of a Blended-Learning Model in Beginners' Ukrainian as L2: Following the Pilot

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Abstract:

The incorporation of blended-learning models (a combination of face-to-face and online teaching and learning) in higher education, and in second-language learning in particular, has been well researched. Studies that empirically inform the instruction and acquisition of language competence in an L2 classroom with an added computer-assisted language-learning component, indicate that when properly designed and applied, blended learning models can significantly improve students' learning experiences (Marsch, 2012; Pena-Sanchez and Hicks, 2006; Stracke, 2005; Stracke, 2007). Specifically, with respect to students' perceptions of this model Bueno-Alastuey and López Pérez (2013) demonstrate that an increased inclusion of technology leads to perceptions of its usefulness for productive skills, specifically the development of speaking in blended learning models (15).

The present study examines the perceptions of L2 learners' in a Ukrainian blended-learning model, piloted in an Elementary Ukrainian L2 classroom at the post-secondary level. The focus is on student perceptions about their engagement, motivation, and success in this new L2 learning environment.

The aim is to discuss the following questions: What do students think overall about the blended-learning model?; Which elements of the proposed model do they find most or least helpful?; How do students view ways in which the discussed model could be improved or enhanced?; In what ways is the discussed model seen to impact student L2 learning experiences?; How and in what ways do students consider the model contributing or not to the development of different skills and language proficiency in different language areas?

In order to collect data, a questionnaire consisting of 44 open- and close-ended questions was developed and administered in 2015-2016. The questions were designed to elicit information regarding participants' demographics, their knowledge and prior experience with computer and Internet technologies, reasons for taking the course, and importantly participant perceptions of the effectiveness of the blended-learning materials and students' overall level of satisfaction with the model.

The results are first studied quantitatively in order to analyze the distribution and significance of various factors that relate to student perceptions towards the model. The data is also analyzed qualitatively in order to examine topics that emerge from the data itself, and to gain insights into various student perceptions of the model and how particular elements of it relate to learning experience and the learning process overall.

The results of the proposed study will provide valuable input into blended-learning design, implementation, and research associated with this contemporary teaching and learning model in an L2 classroom.

References:

Bueno-Alastuey, M.C. and M.V. López Pérez. (2013). Evaluation of a blended learning language course: students' perceptions of appropriateness for the development of skills and language areas. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, doi: 10.1080/09588221.2013.770037.